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THE

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OF THE

REV. ANDREW FULLER,

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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THE

GOSPEL ITS OWN WITNESS;

OR,

THE HOLY NATURE AND DIVINE HARMONY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

CONTRASTED WITH

THE IMMORALITY AND ABSURDITY

OF

DEISM.

Laying his hand on the Bible, he would say, "There is true philosophy. This is the wisdom that speaks to the heart. A bad life is the only grand objection to this Book."

EARL OF ROCHESTER.

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PREFACE.

THE struggle between religion and irreligion has existed in the world in all ages; and if there be two opposite interests which divide its inhabitants, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God, it is reasonable to expect that the contest will continue till one of them be exterminated. The peaceful nature of Christianity does not require that we should make peace with its adversaries, cease to repel their attacks, or even that we should act merely on the defensive. On the contrary, we are required to make use of those weapons of the divine warfare with which we are furnished, for the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

The opposition of the present age has not been confined to the less important points of Christianity, nor even to its first principles: Christianity itself is treated as imposture. The same things, it is true, have been frequently advanced, and as frequently repelled, in former ages; but the adversaries of the gospel of late, encouraged it should seem by the temper of the times, have renewed the attack with redoubled vigour. One of their most popular writers, hoping to avail himself of this circumstance, is pleased to entitle his performance *The Age of Reason*. This writer is aware that flatterry is one of the most powerful means of gaining admission to the human mind; such a compliment, therefore, to the present age, was doubtless considered as a masterstroke of policy. Nor is Mr. Paine less obliging to himself than to his readers, but takes it for granted that the cause for which he pleads is that of reason and truth. The considerate reader, however, may remark, that those writers who are not ashamed to beg the question in the title page, are seldom the most liberal or impartial in the execution of the work.

One thing which has contributed to the advantage of Infidelity is, the height to which political disputes have arisen, and the degree in which they have interested the passions and prejudices of mankind. Those who favour the sentiments of a set of men in one thing, will be in danger of thinking favourably of them in others; at least they will not be apt to view them in so ill a light as if they had been advanced by persons of different sentiment in other things, as well as in religion. It is true, there may be nothing

more friendly to infidelity in the nature of one political system than another; nothing that can justify professing Christians in accusing one another, merely on account of a difference of this kind, of favouring the interests of Atheism and irreligion: nevertheless it becomes those who think favourably of the political principles of Infidels to take heed lest they be insensibly drawn away to think lightly of religion. All the nations of the earth and all disputes on the best or worst mode of government, compared with this are less than nothing and vanity.

To this it may be added, that the eagerness with which men engage in political disputes, take which side we may, is unfavourable to a zealous adherence to the gospel. Any mere worldly object, if it become the principal thing which occupies our thoughts and affections, will weaken our attachment to religion: and if once we become cool and indifferent to this, we are in the high-road to Infidelity. There are cases, no doubt, relating to civil government, in which it is our duty to act, and that with firmness: but to make such things the chief object of our attention, or the principal topic of our conversation, is both sinful and injurious. Many a promising character in the religious world has, by these things, been utterely ruined.

The writer of the following pages is not induced to offer them to the public eye from an apprehension that *the Church of Christ is in danger*. Neither the downfall of Popery, nor the triumph of infidels, as though they had hereby overturned Christianity, have ever been to him the cause of a moment's uneasiness. If Christianity be of God, as he verily believes it to to be, they cannot overthrow it. He must be possessed of but *little faith* who can tremble, though in a storm, for the safety of the vessel which contains his Lord and Master. There would be one argument less for the divinity of the scriptures, if the same powers which gave existence to the Anti-christian dominion had not been employed in taking it away.* But though truth has nothing to fear, it does not follow that its friends should be inactive; if we should have no apprehensions for the safety of Christianity, we may, nevertheless, feel for the rising generation. The Lord confers an honour upon his servants in condescending to make use of their humble efforts in preserving and promoting his interest in the world. If the present attempt may be thus accepted and honoured by Him to whose name it is sincerely dedicated, the writer will receive a rich reward.

Kettering, *Oct.* 10, 1799.

* The powers of Europe, signified by the ten horns, or kings, into which the Roman empire should be divided, were to give their kingdoms to the beast. They did so: and France particularly took the lead. The same powers, it is predicted, shall hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire. They have begun to do so: and in this business also France has taken the lead. Rev. xvii. 12. 13. 16—18.

INTRODUCTION.

THE controversies between believers and unbelievers are confined to a narrower ground than those of professed believers with one another. Scripture testimony, any farther than as it bears the character of truth, and approves itself to the conscience, or is produced for the purpose of explaining the nature of genuine Christianity, is here out of the question. *Reason* is the common ground on which they must meet to decide their contests. On this ground Christian writers have successfully closed with their antagonists: so much so, that of late ages, notwithstanding all their boast of reason, not one in ten of them can be kept to the fair and honourable use of this weapon. On the contrary, they are driven to substitute dark insinuation, low wit, profane ridicule, and gross abuse. Such were the weapons of Shaftesbury, Tindal, Morgan, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon: and such are the weapons of the author of *the Age of Reason*. Among various well-written performances, in answer to their several productions, the reader may see a concise and able refutation of the greater part of them in *Leland's Review of the Deistical Writers*.

It is not my design to go over the various topics usually discussed in this controversy, but to select a single one, which, I conceive, has not been so fully attended to, but that it may yet be considered with advantage. The *internal evidence* which Christianity possesses, particularly in respect of its holy nature and divine harmony, will be the subject of the present inquiry.

Mr. Paine, after the example of many others, endeavours to discredit the scriptures by representing the number of hands through which they have passed, and the uncertainty of the historical evidence by which they are supported. "It is a matter altogether of uncertainty to us," he says, "whether such of the writings as now appear under the names of the Old and New Testament, are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them; or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up."* It is a good work which many writers have undertaken, to prove the validity of the Christian history; and to show that we have as good evidence for the truth of the great facts which it relates as we have for the truth of any ancient events whatever.† But if, in addition to this, it can be proved that the scriptures contain internal characteristics of divinity, or that they carry in them the evidence of their authenticity, this will at once answer all objections from the supposed uncertainty of historical evidence.

Historians inform us of a certain valuable medicine, called *Mithridate*, an antidote to poison. It is said to have been "invented by Mithridates, king of Pontus; that the receipt of it was found in a cabinet, written with his own had, and was carried to Rome by Pompey; that it was translated into verse by Democrates, a famous physician; and that it was afterwaads translated by Galen, from whom we have it."‡ Now supposing this medicine to be efficacious for the professed purpose, of what account would it be to object to the authenticity of its history? If a modern caviller should take it into his head to allege that the preparation has passed through so many hands, and that there is so much hearsay and uncertainty attending it, that no dependence can be placed upon it, and that it had better be rejected from our Materia Medica; he would be asked, *Has it not been tried, and been found to be effectual; and that in a great variety of instances?* Such are Mr. Paine's objections to the Bible; and such is the answer that may be given him.

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. pp. 10, 11. † Lardner, Simpson, and others.

‡ Chambers's Dictionary, Art. Mithridate.

This language is not confined to infidel writers. Mr. Locke speaks of what he calls "traditional revelation," or revelation as we have it, in such a manner as to convey the idea, that we have no evidence of the scriptures being the word of God, but from a succession of witnesses having told us so.* But I conceive these sacred writings may contain such *internal* evidence of their being what they profess to be, as that it might, with equal reason, be doubted whether the world was created by the power of God, as whether they were written by the inspiration of his Spirit: and if so, our dependence is not upon mere tradition.

It is true, the scriptures having been conveyed to us through the medium of man, the work must necessarily, in some respects, have been humanized; yet there may be sufficient marks of divinity upon it, to render it evident to every candid mind that it is of God.

We may call the Mosaic account of the creation a tradition, and may be said to know through this medium that the heavens and the earth are the productions of divine power. But it is not through this medium only that we know it: the heavens and the earth carry in them evident marks of their divine original. These works of the Almighty speak for themselves; and in language which none but those who are willfully deaf can misunderstand: *Their sound is gone forth throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* Were any man to pretend that its being a matter of revelation, and to us merely traditional revelation, that God made the heavens and the earth, and therefore that a degree of uncertainty must necessarily attend it; he would be reminded that the thing itself carried in it its own evidence. Let it be candidly considered whether the same may not be said of the holy scriptures. They will *admit* of historical defence; but they do not require it. Their contents, come through whose hands they may, prove them to be of God. It was on this principle that the gospel was proclaimed in the form of a *testimony.* The primitive preachers were not required by him who sent them to prove their doctrine in the manner that philosophers were wont to establish a

* Human Understanding, Book IV. Chap. XVIII.

proposition; but to *declare the counsel of God*, and leave it. In delivering their message, they *commended themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

It is no objection to this statement of things that the scriptures are not embraced by every man, whatever be the disposition of his mind This is a property that no divine production whatever possesses; and to require it is equally unreasonable, as to insist that for a book to be perfectly legible it must be capable of being read by those who shut their eyes upon it. Mr. Paine holds up the advantages of the book of nature in order to disparage that of scripture, and says, "No Deist can doubt whether the works of nature be God's works." An admirable proof this that we have arrived at *the age of reason!* Can no Atheist doubt it? I might as well say, No Christian doubts the truth of the scriptures: the one proves just as much as the other. A prejudiced mind discerns nothing of divine beauty, either in nature or scripture; yet each may include the most indubitable evidence of being wrought by the finger of God.

If Christianity can be proved to be a religion that inspires the love of God and man; yea, and the only religion in the world that does so; if it endues the mind of him that embraces it with a principle of justice, meekness, chastity, and goodness; and even gives a tone to the morals of the society at large; it will then appear to carry its evidence along with it. The effects which it produces will be its letters of recommendation; written *not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.* Moreover, if Christianity can be proved to be in harmony with itself, correspondent with observation and experience, and consistent with the clearest dictates of sober reason, it will further appear to carry in it its own evidence: come through whose hands it may, it will evince itself to be what it professes to be—a religion from God.

I will only add, in this place, that the Christianity here defended is not Christianity as it is corrupted by popish superstition, or as interwoven with national establishments, for the accomplishment of secular purposes; but, as it is taught in the New Testament, and practised by sincere Christians. There is no doubt,

but that, in many instances, Christianity has been adopted by worldly men, even by Infidels themselves, for the purposes of promoting their political designs. Finding the bulk of the people inclined to the Christian religion under some particular form, and attached to certain leading persons among them who sustained the characters of teachers, they have considered it as a piece of good policy to give this religion an establishment, and these teachers a share in the government. It is thus that religion, to its great dishonour, has been converted into an engine of state. The politician may be pleased with his success, and the teacher with his honours, and even the people be so far misled as to love to have it so; but the mischief resulting from it to religion is incalculable. Even where such establishments have arisen from piety, they have not failed to corrupt the minds of Christians from the simplicity which is in Christ. It was by these means that the Church at an early period, from being the bride of Christ, gradually degenerated to a harlot, and, in the end, became the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. The good that is done in such communities is not *in consequence* of their peculiar ecclesiastical constitution, but in spite of it: it arises from the virtue of individuals, which operates *notwithstanding* the disadvantages of their situation.

These are the things that afford a handle to unbelievers. They seldom choose to attack Christianity as it is drawn in the sacred writings, and exemplified in the lives of real Christians, who stand at a distance from worldly parade, political struggles, or state intrigues; but as it is corrupted and abused by worldly men. Mr. Paine racks his imagination to make out a resemblance betwixt the heathen mythology and Christianity. While he is going over the ground of Christianity as instituted by Christ and his apostles, the resemblance is faint indeed. There are only two points in which he even pretends to find an agreement; and these are formed by his misrepresenting the scriptures. The heathen deities were said to be *celestially begotten*; and Christ is called *the Son of God.** The heathens had a plurality of deities, even

* To give a colour to this statement, he is obliged to affirm a most palpable falsehood, that only Gentiles believed Jesus to be the son of God.

twenty or thirty thousand ; and Christianity has reduced them to three ! It is easy to see that this is ground not suited to Mr. Paine's purpose : he therefore hastens to corrupted Christianity ; and here he finds plenty of materials. "The Statue of Mary," he says "succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints. The mythologists had gods for every thing. The Christian mythologists had saints for every thing. The church became as crowded with the one, as the pantheon had been with the other ; and Rome was the place of both."* Very true, Mr. Paine ; but you are not so ignorant as to mistake this for Christianity. Had you been born and educated in Italy, or Spain, you might have been excused in calling this "The Christian theory ;" but to write in this manner with your advantages is disingenuous. Such conduct would have disgraced any cause but yours. It is capable, however, of some improvement. It teaches us to defend nothing but the truth as it is in Jesus. It also affords presumptive evidence in its favour ; for if Christianity itself were false, there is little doubt but that you, or some of your fellow labourers, would be able to prove it so ; and this would turn greatly to your account. Your neglecting this, and directing your artillery chiefly against its corruptions and abuses, betrays a consciousness that the thing itself, if not invulnerable, is yet not so easy of attack. If Christianity had really been a relic of heathenism, as you suggest, there is little reason to think that you would have so strenuously opposed it.

* Age of reason, *Part* I. p. 5.

THE

GOSPEL ITS OWN WITNESS, &c.

PART I.

IN WHICH THE HOLY NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS CONTRASTED WITH THE IMMORALITY OF DEISM.

THE greatest enemies of Christianity would still be thought friendly to morality, and will plead for it as necessary to the well being of mankind. However immoral men may be in their practice, and to whatever lengths they may proceed in extenuating particular vices; yet they cannot plead for immorality in the gross. A sober, upright, humble, chaste, and generous character, is allowed, on all hands, to be preferable to one that is profligate, treacherous, proud, unchaste, or cruel. Such, indeed, is the sense which men possess of right and wrong, that, whenever they attempt to disparage the former, or vindicate the latter, they are reduced to the necessity of covering each with a false disguise. They cannot traduce good *as good*, or justify evil *as evil*. The love of God must be called *fanaticism*, and benevolence to men *methodism*, or some such opprobrious name, before they can depreciate them. Theft, cruelty, and murder, on the other hand, must assume the names of *wisdom* and *good policy*, ere a plea can be set up in their defence. Thus were the arguments for the abolition of the slave trade answered, and in this manner was that

iniquitous traffic defended in the British Parliament. Doubtless there is a *woe* hanging over the heads of those men who thus *called evil good, and good evil;* nevertheless, we see, even in their conduct, the amiableness of righteousness, and the impossibility of fairly opposing it.

CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIANITY REVEALS A GOD GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS : BUT DEISM, THOUGH IT ACKNOWLEDGES A GOD, YET DENIES OR OVERLOOKS HIS MORAL CHARACTER.

THERE are certain perfections which all who acknowledge a God agree in attributing to him : such are those of wisdom, power, immutability, &c. These, by Christian divines, are usually termed his *natural* perfections. There are others which no less evidently belong to deity, such as goodness, justice, veracity, &c. all which may be expressed in one word—*holiness ;* and these are usually termed his *moral* perfections. Both natural and moral attributes tend to display the glory of the divine character, but especially the latter. Wisdom and power, in the Supreme Being, render him a proper object of admiration ; but justice, veracity, and goodness, attract our love. No being is beloved for his greatness, but for his goodness. Moral excellence is the highest glory of an intelligent being, created or uncreated. Without this, wisdom would be subtilty, power tyranny, and immutability the same thing as being unchangeably wicked.

We account it the glory of revelation, that, while it displays the natural perfections of God in a way superior to any thing that has been called religion, it exhibits his moral excellence in a manner peculiar to itself. It was with good reason that Moses affirmed in behalf of Israel, *Their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges.* The God, or Rock, of Israel is constantly described as a being glorious in holiness, and as requiring pure and holy worship : *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and in truth.—The Lord our God is holy.—Holy and reverend is his name.—Glory ye in his holy name.—And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.—He is of purer*

eyes than to behold evil ; and cannot look on iniquity.—A God of truth, and without iniquity just and right is he. Is any thing like this to be found in the writings of the ancient heathens? No. The generality of their deities were the patrons of vice, and their worship was accompanied with the foulest abominations that could disgrace the nature of man. Justice, benevolence, and veracity were not considered as necessary in any part of their religion, and a large proportion of it consisted in drunkenness, lewdness, and the offering up of human sacrifices.

The object of Christian adoration is JEHOVAH, the God of Israel; whose character for holiness, justice and goodness, is displayed in the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, in a more affecting light than by any of the peceding dispensations. But who or what is the God of Deists? It is true, that they have been shamed out of the polytheism of the heathens. They have reduced their thirty thousand deities into one: but what is his character? What attributes do they ascribe to him? For any thing that appears in their writings, he is far from the holy, the just, and the good, as those of their heathen predecessors. They enjoy a pleasure, it is allowed, in contemplating the productions of wisdom and power; but as to holiness, it is foreign from their inquiries : a holy God does not appear to be suited to their wishes.

Lord Bolingbroke acknowledges a God, but is for reducing all his attributes to *wisdom* and power; blaming divines for distinguishing between his physical and moral attributes ; asserting, that "we cannot ascribe goodness and justice to God, according to our ideas of them, nor argue with any certainty about them ; and that it is absurd to deduce moral obligations from the moral attributes of God, or to pretend to imitate him in those attributes."*

Voltaire admits a "supreme, eternal, incomprehensible Intelligence ;" but passes over his moral character.†

Mr. Paine says, "I believe in one God, and more ;"‡ and in the course of his work ascribes to him the natural perfections of *wisdom* and *power;* but is very sparing in what he says of his moral

* See Leland's Review, Let. XXIII.

† Ignorant Philospher, Nos. XV. XVI. XVII. ‡ Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 1.

excellence, of his being the moral governor of the world, and of man's being an accountable creature. He affects, indeed, to be shocked at the impurity of the ideas and expressions of the Bible, and to feel for "the honour of his Creator in having such a book called after his name."* This is the only passage, that I recollect, in which he expresses any concern for the moral character of God; and whether this would have appeared but for the sake of giving an edge to reproach, let the reader judge.

How are we to account for these writers thus denying or overlooking the moral character of the Deity, but by supposing that a *holy* God is not suited to their inclinations? If we bear a sincere regard to moral excellence, we shall regard every being in proportion as he appears to possess it; and if we consider the Divine Being as possessing it supremely, and as the source of it to all other beings, it will be natural for us to love him supremely, and all other beings in subserviency to him. And if we love him supremely, on account of his moral character, it will be no less natural to take pleasure in contemplating him under that character.

On the other hand, if we be enemies to moral excellence, it will render every being who possesses it unlovely in our eyes. Virtuous or holy characters may indeed command our *respect*, and even *admiration;* but will not attract our *affection.* Whatever regard we may bear to them, it will not be on account of their virtue, but of other qualities of which they may be possessed. Virtuous characters may be also wise and mighty; and we may admire their ingenuity, be delighted with their splendour, and take pleasure in visiting them, that we may inspect their curiosities; but, in such cases, the more things of a moral nature are kept at a distance, the more agreeable will be our visit. Much the same may be said of the Supreme Being. If we be enemies to moral excellence, God, as a holy being, will possess no loveliness in our eyes. We may admire him with that kind of admiration which is paid to a great genius, and may feel a pleasure in tracing the grandeur and ingenuity of his operations; but the farther his moral character is kept out of sight, the more agreeable it will be to us.

* Age of Reason, *Part* I p. 16.

Lord Shaftesbury, not contented with overlooking, attempts to satirize the scripture representations of the divine character. "One would think," he says, "it were easy to understand, that provocation and offence, anger revenge, jealousy in point of honour or power, love of fame, glory, and the like, belong only to limited beings, and are necessarily excluded a Being which is perfect and universal."* That many things are attributed to the Divine Being in a figurative style, speaking merely after the manner of men, and that they are so understood by Christians, Lord Shaftesbury must have well known. We do not think it lawful, however, so to explain away these expressions, as to consider the Great Supreme as incapable of being offended with sin and sinners, as destitute of pleasure or displeasure, or as unconcerned about his own glory, the exercise of which involves the general good of the universe. A being of this description would be neither loved nor feared, but would become the object of universal contempt.

It is no part of the imperfection of our nature that we are susceptible of provocation and offence, of anger, of jealousy, and of a just regard to our own honour. Lord Shaftesbury himself would have ridiculed the man, and still more the magistrate, that should have been incapable of these properties on certain occasions. They are planted in our nature by the Divine being, and are adapted to answer valuable purposes. If they be perverted and abused to sordid ends, which is too frequently the case, this does not alter their nature, nor lessen their utility. What would Lord Shaftesbury have thought of a magistrate, who should have witnessed a train of assassinations and murders, without being in the least *offended* at them, or *angry* with the perpetrators, or inclined to take *vengeance* on them, for the public good? What would he think of a British House of Commons, which should exercise no *jealousy* over the encroachments of a minister; or of a King of Great Britain, who should suffer, with perfect indifference, his just authority to be contemned?

'But we are *limited* beings, and are therefore in danger of having our just rights invaded.' True; and though God be unlimited, and so in no danger of being deprived of his essential glory, yet he

* Characteristics, Vol. I. § 5.

may lose his just authority *in the esteem of creatures*; and were this to take place universally, the whole creation would be a scene of anarchy and misery. But we understand Lord Shaftesbury. He wishes to compliment his Maker out of all his moral excellencies. He has no objection to a God, provided he be one after his own heart, one who shall pay no such regard to human affairs as to call men to account for their ungodly deeds. If he thought the Creator of the world to bear such a character, it is no wonder that he should speak of him with what he calls "good humour, or pleasantry."* In speaking of such a being, he can, as Mr. Hume expresses it, "feel more at ease," than if he conceived of God as he is characterized in the holy scriptures. But let men beware how they play with such subjects. Their conceptions do not alter the nature of God: and, however they suffer themselves to trifle now, they may find in the end that there is not only a God, but a *God that judgeth in the earth.*

* Characteristics, Vol. I. § 3

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIANITY TEACHES US TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD, AND TO DEVOTE OURSELVES TO HIS SERVICE: BUT DEISM, THOUGH IT CONFESSES ONE SUPREME BEING, YET REFUSES TO WOSHIP HIM.

If there is a God he ought to be worshiped. This is a principle which no man will be able to eradicate from his bosom, or even to suppress, but at great labour and expense. The scriptures, it is well known, both inculcate and inspire the worship of God. Their language is, *O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.—O come let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.—Give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto his Name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him all the earth.—Give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; made known his deeds among the people.—Glory ye in his holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore.*

The *spirit* also which the scriptures inspire is favourable to divine worship. The grand lesson which they teach is *love;* and love to God delights to express itself in acts of obedience, adoration, supplication, and praise. The natural language of a heart well affected to God is, *I will call upon him as long as I live.—Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.—Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*

Is it thus with our adversaries? They speak, indeed, of "true and fabulous theology," and of "true and false religion;" and often talk of "adoring" the Supreme Being. But if there be no

true religion among Christians, where are we to look for it? Surely not among Deists. Their "adorations" seem to be a kind of exercises much resembling the benevolent acts of certain persons, who are so extremely averse from ostentation, that nobody knows of their being charitable but themselves.

Mr. Paine professes to "believe in the equality of man, and that religious duties consist in *doing justice, loving mercy, and*"—and what? I thought to be sure he had been going to add, *walking humbly with God.* But I was mistaken. Mr. Paine supplies the place of walking humbly with God, by adding, "*and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy.*"* Some people would have thought that this was included in doing justice, and loving mercy; but Mr. Paine had rather use words without meaning than write in favour of godliness. *Walking humbly with God* is not comprehended in the list of his "religious duties." The very phrase offends him. It is that to him, in quoting scripture, which a nonconductor is to the electrical fluid: it causes him to fly off in an oblique direction; and, rather than say any thing on so offensive a subject, to deal in unmeaning tautology.

Mr. Paine not only avoids the mention of *walking humbly with God*, but attempts to load the practice itself with the foulest abuse.† He does not consider himself as "an outcast, a beggar, or a worm;" he does not approach his Maker through a mediator; he considers "redemption as a fable," and himself as standing in an honourable situation with regard to his relation to the Deity. Some of this may be true; but not the whole. The latter part is only a piece of religious gasconade. If Mr. Paine really thinks so well of his situation as he pretends, the belief of an hereafter would not render him "the slave of terror."‡ But, allowing the whole to be true, it proves nothing. A high conceit of one's self is no proof of excellence. If he choose to rest upon this foundation, he must abide the consequence: but he had better forborne to calumniate others. What is it that has transported this child of reason into a paroxism of fury against devout people? By what

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p 2.

† Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 21. ‡ *Part* II. near the end.

spirit is he inspired, in pouring forth such a torrent of slander? Why is it that he must accuse their humility of "ingratitude," their grief of "affectation," and their prayers of being "dictatorial" to the Almighty? *Cain hated his brother; and wherefore hated he him; because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.* Prayer and devotion are things that Mr. Paine should have let alone, as being out of his province. By attempting, however, to depreciate them, he has borne witness to the devotion of Christians, and fulfilled what is written in a book which he affects to despise, *Speaking evil of the things which he understands not.*

To admit a God, and yet refuse to worship him, is a modern and inconsistent practice. It is a dictate of reason, as well as of revelation: *If the Lord be God, worship him; and if Baal, worship him.* It never was made a question, whether the God in whom we believe should receive our adorations. All nations, in all ages, paid religious homage to the respective deities, or supposed deities, in which they beleived. Modern unbelievers are the only men who have deviated from this practice. How this is to be accounted for, is a subject worthy of inquiry. To me it appears as follows:

In former times, when men were weary of the worship of the true God, they exchanged it for that of idols. I know of no account of the origin of idolatry so rational as that which is given by revelation. *Men did not like to retain God in their knowledge: therefore they were given up to a mind void of judgment; to change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things;* and to defile themselves by abominable wickedness.* It was thus with the people who came to inhabit the country of Samaria after the Israelites were carried captives into Assyria. At first they seemed desirous to know and fear the God of Israel; but when they came to be informed of his holy character, and what kind of worship he required, they presently discovered their dislike. They pretended to fear him, but it was mere pretence; for every nation *made gods of their own.*† Now, gods of their

* Rom. ii. † 2 Kings xvii.

own making would doubtless be characterized according to their own mind: they would be patrons of such vices as their makers wished to indulge; gods whom they could approach without fear, and in addressing them be "more at ease," as Mr. Hume says, han in addressing the One living and true God; gods, in fine, the worship of whom might be accompanied with banquetings, revellings, drunkenness, and lewdness. These I conceive, rather than the mere falling down to an idol, were the exercises that interested the passions of the worshippers. These were the exercises that seduced the ungodly part of the Israelitish nation to an imitation of the heathens. They found it extremely disagreeable to be constantly employed in the worship of a *holy* God. Such worship would awe their spirits, damp their pleasures, and restrain their inclinations. It is not surprising, therefore, that they should be continually departing from the worship of Jehovah, and leaning towards that which was more congenial with their propensities. But the situation of modern unbelievers is singular. Things are so circumstanced with them, that they cannot worship the gods which they prefer. They never fail to discover a strong partiality in favour of heathens; but they have not the face to practice or defend their absurd idolatries. The doctrine of One living and true God has appeared in the world, by means of the preaching of the gospel, with such a blaze of evidence, that it has forced itself into the minds of men, whatever has been the temper of their hearts. The stupid idolatry of past ages is exploded. Christianity has driven it out of Europe. The consequence is, great numbers are obliged to acknowledge a God whom they cannot find in their hearts to worship.

If the light that is gone abroad in the earth would permit the rearing of temples to Venus, or Bacchus, or any of the rabble of heathen deities, there is little doubt but that modern unbelievers would, in great numbers, become their devotees: but, seeing they cannot have a god whose worship shall accord with their inclinations, they seem determined not to worship at all. And, to come off with as good a grace as the affair will admit, they compliment the Deity out of his sovereign prerogatives; professing to "love him for his giving them existence, and all their properties, without

interest, and without subjecting them to any thing but their own nature."*

The introduction of so large a portion of heathen mythology into the songs and other entertainments of the stage, sufficiently shows the bias of people's hearts. The house of God gives them no pleasure: but the resurrection of the obscenities, intrigues, and Bacchanalian revels of the old heathens affords them exquisite delight. In a country where Christian worship abounds, this is plainly saying, 'What a weariness is it! O that it were no more! Since, however, we cannot introduce the worship of the gods, we will neglect all worship, and celebrate the praises of our favourite deities in another form.' In a country where Deism has gained the ascendency, this principle is carried still farther. Its language there is, 'Seeing we cannot, for shame, worship any other than the One living and true God, let us abolish the day of worship, and substitute in its place one day in ten, which shall be devoted chiefly to theatrical entertainments, in which we can introduce as much heathenism as we please.'

Mr. Hume acknowledges the *justice* of considering the Deity as infinitely superior to mankind; but he represents it, at the same time, as very generally attended with unpleasant effects, and magnifies the advantages of having gods which are only a little superior to ourselves. He says, "While the Deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief, though altogether just, is apt, when joined with superstitious terrors, to sink the human mind into the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, pennance, humility, and passive suffering, as the only qualities which are acceptable to him. But, where the gods are conceived to be only a little superior to mankind, and to have been many of them advanced from that inferior rank, we are more at our ease in our addresses to them, and may even, without profaneness, aspire to a rivalship and emulation of them. Hence activity, spirit, courage, magnanimity, love of liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people."† It is

* Ignorant Philosopher, No. XXIV.

† Dissertation the Natural History of Religion, § 10.

easy to perceive from this passage, that though Mr. Hume acknowledges the *justice* of conceiving of a God infinitely superior to us, yet his *inclination* is the other way. At least, in a nation, the bulk of which will be supposed to be inclined to superstition, it is better according to his reasoning, and more friendly to virtue, to promote the worship of a number of imaginary deities, than of the One only living and true God. Thus *the fool saith in his heart, No God!*

The sum of the whole is this: Modern unbelievers are Deists theory, Pagans in inclination, and Atheists in practice.

If Deists loved the One only living and true God, they would delight in worshipping him; for love cannot be inoperative: and the only possible way for it to operate towards an infinitely glorious and all-perfect Being is by worshipping his name, and obeying his will. If Mr. Paine really felt for "the honour of his Creator," as he affects to do,* he would mourn in secret for all the great wickedness of which he has committed against him; he would lie in in the dust before him, not merely as "an outcast, a beggar, and a worm," but as a sinner deserving his eternal displeasure. He would be glad of a Mediator, through whom he might approach his offended Creator; and would consider redemption by his blood, not as "a fable," but a divine reality, including all his salvation, and all his desire. Yea, he himself would "turn devout;" and it would be said of him, as of Saul of Tarsus, *Behold he prayeth!* Nor would his prayers, though importunate, be "dictatorial," or his grief "affected." On the contrary, he would look on Him whom he hath pierced, and mourn, as one mourneth for an only son; and be in bitterness, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. But these are things pertaining to godliness; things, alas for him, the mention of which is sufficient to inflame his mind with malignity, and provoke him to the most outrageous and abusive language.

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 16.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHRISTIAN STANDARD OF MORALITY IS ENLARGED, AND FREE FROM IMPURITY: BUT DEISM CONFINES OUR OBLIGATIONS TO THOSE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OUR OWN SPECIES, AND GREATLY PALLIATES VICE WITH REGARD TO A BREACH EVEN OF THEM.

PERSONS who profess the strictest regard to the rule of duty, and carry the extent of it to the highest pitch, may, it is allowed, be insincere, and contradict by their practice what they advance in their professions. But those whose ideas of virtue are low and contracted, and who embrace every opportunity to reconcile the vices of the world with its sacred precepts, cannot possibly be accounted any other than its enemies.

That which the scriptures call *holiness*, *spirituality*, &c. as much surpasses every thing that goes under the names of morality and virtue among unbelievers, as a living man surpasses a painting, or even a rude and imperfect daubing. If, in this controversy, I have used these terms to express the scriptural ideas, it is not because in their ordinary acceptation they are equal to the purpose, but for the sake of meeting unbelievers upon their own ground. I have a right, however, to understand by them, those dispositions of the mind, whatever they be, which are *right*, *fit*, *or amiable*; and so explained, I undertake to prove that the morality and virtue inculcated by the gospel is enlarged and free from impurity, while that which is taught by its adversaries is the reverse.

It is a distinguishing property of the Bible that all its precepts aim directly at the heart. It never goes about to form the mere exterior of man. To merely external duties it is a stranger. It forms the lives of men no otherwise than by forming their dispositions. It never addresses itself to their vanity, selfishness, or any

other corrupt propensity. You are not pressed to consider what men will think of you, or how it will affect your temporal interest; but what is right, and what is necessary to your eternal well-being. If you comply with its precepts you must *be*, and not merely *seem* to be. It is the heart that is required: and all the different prescribed forms of worship and obedience are but so many modifications, or varied expressions of it.

Is any thing like this to be found in the writings of Deists? No. Their deity does not seem to take cognizance of the heart. According to them "There is no merit or crime in intention."* Their morality only goes to form the exterior of man. It allows the utmost scope for wicked desires, provided they be not carried into execution to the injury of society.

The morality which the scriptures inculcate is summed up in these few words; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself.* This single principle is competent to the government of all intelligent nature. It is a band that would hold together the whole rational creation; and diffuse peace, order, and happiness, wherever it existed.

If mankind loved God supremely, there would be no idolatry upon earth, nor any of its attendant abominations; no profaning the name of God, nor making a gain of godliness; no opposing, corrupting, perverting, nor abusing the truth; no perjuries, nor hypocrasies; no despising of those that are good; no arrogance, ingratitude, pride, nor self complacency, under the smiles of providence: and no murmuring, heart-rising, sullenness, nor suicide, under its frowns. Love would render it their meat and drink to fear, honour, and obey him, and induce them to take every thing well at his hands.—And if they loved their fellow creatures as themselves, for his sake, there would be no wars, rivalships, antipathies, nor breach of treaties, between nations; no envyings, strifes, wrongs, slanders, duels, litigations, nor intrigues, between neighbours; no flattering complaisance, nor persecuting bitterness, in religion; no deceit, fraud, nor over-reaching, in trade; no tyrrany, venality, haughtiness, nor oppression, among the great; no envy, discon-

* Volney's Law of Nature, p. 13.

tent, disaffection, cabals, nor evil-devisings, among common people ; no murders, robberies, thefts, burglaries, nor brothels, in city or country ; no cruelty, in parents or masters ; no ingratitude nor disobedience, in children or servants ; no unkindness, treachery, nor implacable resentments, between friends ; no illicit connexions between the sexes ; no infidelities, jealousies, nor bitter contentions, in families ; in short, none of those streams of death, one or more of which flow through every vein of society, and poison its enjoyments.

Such is the principle and rule of Christian morality ; and what has Deism to substitute in its place ? Can it find a succedaneum for love ? No, but it proposes the love of ourselves instead of the love of God. Lord Bolingbroke resolves all morality into *self-love*, as its first principle. " We love ourselves," he says, " we love our families, we love the particular societies to which we belong ; and our benevolence extends at last to the whole race of mankind. Like so many different vortices, the centre of all is self love."* Such also are the principles of Volney.

Could this diposition be admitted as a proper source of moral action, the world would certainly not be wanting in morality. All men possess at least the *principle* of it, whether they carry it to the extent which Lord Bolingbroke proposes, or not : for though some may err in the choice of their end, and others in the means of obtaining it ; yet no man was ever so wanting in regard to himself as intentionally to pursue his own injury. But if it should prove that to render self-love the source of moral action in the same thing as for every individual to treat himself as the Supreme Being ; and, therefore, that this principle, instead of being a source of virtue, is the very essence of vice, and the source of all the mischief in the universe, consequences may follow of a very different complexion.

To subordinate self-love I have no objection. It occupies a place in the Christian standard of morality, being the measure of that love which we owe to our fellow-creatures. And, as the universal love which we owe to them does not hinder but that some of them, by reason of their situation or peculiar relation to

* Posthumous Works, Vol. V. p. 82.

us, may require a larger portion of our regard than others, it is the same with respect to ourselves. Our own concerns are our own immediate charge ; and those which are of the greatest importance, such as the concerns of our souls, undoubtedly require a proportionate degree of attention. But all this does not affect the present subject of inquiry. It is our supreme, and not our subordinate regard, that will ever be the source of action.

I take it for granted, that it is the intention of every good government, human or divine, to *unite* its subjects, and not to set them at variance. But there can be no union without a common object of regard. Either a character whom all love and venerate, or an end which all pursue, or both, is that to a community which a head-stone is to an arch ; nor can they keep together without it. It is thus that the love of God holds creation together. He is that lovely character to whom all holy intelligencies bear supreme affection ; and the display of his glory, in the universal triumph of truth and righteousness, is that end which they all pursue. Thus united in their grand object, they cannot but feel a union of heart with one another, arising from, what is common to every other voluntary union, a congenialty of sentiments and pursuits.

But if our supreme affection terminate on ourselves, and no being, created or uncreated, be regarded but for our own sakes, it is manifest there can be no union beyond the sphere in which other beings become voluntarily subservient to our wishes. The Supreme Being, if our plan do not comport with his, will be continually thwarting us ; and so we shall be always at variance with *him*. And as to created beings those individuals whom we desire to be subservient to our wishes, having the same right, and the same inclination, to require that we should be subservient to theirs, will also be continually thwarting us ; and so we shall always be at variance with them. In short, nothing but an endless succession of discord and confusion can be the consequence. Every one setting up for pre-eminence, every one must of course contribute to the general state of anarchy and misery which will pervade the community. Such, is in fact, the state of this apostate world ; and, but for divine providence, which for wise ends balances all human affairs, causing one set of evils to counteract the influence of another,

and all to answer ends remote from the intention of the perpetrators, it must be overset by its own disorders.

To regard every other being, created or uncreated, only for our own sakes, is supreme self-love; and instead of being a source of virtue, is itself abominable, and the source of all the mischief and misery in the universe. All the evils just enumerated are to be traced to this principle, as their common parent; nor is there any ground of hope that it will ever produce effects of a different nature. Some persons have talked much of "self-love *ripening* into benevolence." Had it been said *malevolence*, it had been nearer the truth; for it is contrary to all experience that any thing should change its nature by becoming more mature. No, a child in knowledge may discern, that, if ever genuine benevolence exist in the breast of an individual, or extend its healing wings over a bleeding world, it must be by the subversion of this principle, and by the prevalence of that religion which teaches us to love God supremely, ourselves subordinately, and our fellow creatures as ourselves.

To furnish a standard of morality, some of our adversaries have had recourse to *the laws of the state;* avowing them to be the rule or measure of virtue. Mr. Hobbes maintained that *The civil law was the sole foundation of right and wrong*, and that *religion had no obligation but as enjoined by the magistrate.* And Lord Bolingbroke often writes in a strain nearly similar, disowning any other sanction or penalty by which obedience to the law of nature is enforced, than those which are provided by the laws of the land.* But this rule is defective, absurd, contradictory, and subersive of all true morality. First, It is grossly *defective.* This is justly represented by a prophet of their own. "It is a narrow notion of innocence," says Seneca, "to measure a man's goodness only by the law. Of how much larger extent is the rule of duty, or of good offices, than that of legal right? How many things are there which piety, humanity, liberality, justice, and fidelity require, which yet are not within the compass of the public statutes?"†

*Works, Vol. V. p. 90.

†In Leland's Advantages and Necessity of Revelation. Vol. II. *Part* II Chap. III. p. 42.

Secondly, It is *absurd;* for if the public statutes be the only standard of right and wrong, legislators in framing them could be under no law: nor is it possible that in any instance they should have enacted injustice. Thirdly, It is *contradictory*. Human laws, we all know, require different and opposite things in different nations; and in the same nation at different times. If this principle be right, it is right for Deists to be persecuted for their opinions at one period, and to persecute others for theirs at another. Finally, It is *subversive of all true morality*. "The civil laws," as Dr. Leland has observed, "take no cognizance of secret crimes, and provide no punishment for internal bad dispositions, or corrupt affections. A man may be safely as wicked as he pleases, on this principle, provided he can manage so as to escape punishment from the laws of his country, which very bad men, and those that are guilty of great vices, easily may, and frequently do evade."

Rosseau has recourse to *feelings* as his standard. "I have only to consult myself," he says, "concerning what I ought to do. All that I *feel* to be right is right. Whatever I *feel* to be wrong is wrong. All the morality of our actions lies in the judgment we ourselves form of them."* By this rule his conduct through life appears to have been directed; a rule which, if universally regarded, would deluge the world with every species of iniquity.

But that on which our opponents insist the most, and with the greatest show of argument, is *the law and light of nature*. This is their professed rule on all occasions; and its praises they are continually sounding. I have no desire to depreciate the light of nature, or to disparage its value as a rule. On the contrary, I consider it as occupying an important place in the divine government. Whatever may be said of the light possessed by the heathen as being derived from revelation, I feel no difficulty in acknowledging that the grand law which they are under is that of nature. Revelation itself appears, to me, so to represent it; holding it up as the rule by which they shall be judged, and declaring its dictates to be so clear, as to leave them *without excuse*.† Nature and scripture appear, to me, to be as much in harmony, as Moses and Christ; both are celebrated in the same Psalm.‡

*Emilius, Vol. I. pp. 166—168. †Rom. ii. 12—16, i. 20. ‡Psa. xix.

By the *light of nature*, however, I do not mean those ideas which heathens have actually entertained, many of which have been darkness; but those which were presented to them by the works of creation, and which they might have possessed, had they been desirous of retaining God in their knowledge. And by the *dictates of nature*, with regard to right and wrong, I understand those things which appear to the mind of a person sincerely disposed to understand and practice his duty, to be *natural*, *fit*, or *reasonable*. There is, doubtless, an eternal difference between right and wrong; and this difference, in a vast variety of instances, is manifest to every man who sincerely and impartially considers it. So manifest have the power and Godhead of the Creator been rendered in every age, that no person of an upright disposition could, through mere mistake, fall into idolatry or impiety; and every one who has continued in these abominations is *without excuse*. The desire also which every human being feels of having justice done to him from all other persons must render it sufficiently manifest to his judgment that he ought to do the same to them; and wherein he acts otherwise, his conscience, unless it be seared as with a hot iron, must accuse him.

But does it follow from hence that revelation is unnecessary? Certainly not. It is one thing for nature to afford so much light in matters of right and wrong, as to leave the sinner without excuse; and another to afford him any well-grounded hope of forgiveness, or to answer his difficulties concerning the account which something within him says he must hereafter give of his present conduct.

Farther: It is one thing to leave sinners without excuse in sin, and another thing to recover them from it. That the light of nature is insufficient for the latter, is demonstrated by melancholy fact. Instead of returning to God and virtue, those nations which have possessed the highest degrees of it have gone farther and farther into immorality. There is not a single example of a people of their own accord, returning to the acknowledgment of the true God, or extricating themselves from the most irrational species of idolatry, or desisting from the most odious kinds of vice. Those nations where science diffused a more than ordinary lustre, were

as superstitious, and as wicked as the most barbarous; and in many instances exceeded them. It was, I doubt not, from a close observation of the different efficacy of nature and scripture, that the writer of the *nineteenth Psalm*, (a Psalm which Mr. Paine pretends to admire,) after having given a just tribute of praise to the former, affirmed of the latter, *The law of Jehovah is perfect, converting the soul.*

Again: It is one thing for that which is natural, fit, or reasonable, in matters of duty, to approve itself to a mind *sincerely disposed to understand and practice it*, and another to approve itself to a mind of an opposite description. The judgments of men concerning the dictates of nature are greatly influenced by their prevailing inclinations. If under certain circumstances they feel prompted to a particular course of conduct, they will be apt to consider that incitement as a dictate of nature, though it may be no other than corrupt propensity: and thus, while the law of nature is continually in their mouth, their principles, as well as their conduct, are a continual violation of it. How was it that, notwithstanding the light of nature shone round the old philosophers, their minds, in matters of morality, were dark as night, and their precepts, in many instances, full of impurity? Did nature inspire Plato to teach the doctrine of a community of wives; Lycurgus to tolerate dextrous thieving; Solon to allow of sodomy; Seneca to encourage drunkenness, and suicide; and almost all of them to declare in favour of lewdness?* No, verily; it is a perversion of language to call the principles of such men the dictates of nature; they are unnatural and abominable; as contrary to reason as to religion.

It is true, what is called nature, by modern Infidels, is not quite so gross as the above; but it falls very little short of it. So far as relates to the encouragement of theft, and perhaps of unnatural crimes, they would disavow; and for this we are indebted to Christianity: but as to fornication and adultery, they are not a whit behind their predecessors. Lord Herbert, the father of the English Deists, and whose writings are far more sober than the generality of those who have come after him, apologizes for lewd-

* See Leland's Advantages and Necessity of Revelation, Vol. II. pp. 147, 50, 59, 210, 213.

ness, in certain cases, as resembling thirst in a dropsy, and inactivity in a lethargy.* Lord Bolingbroke unblushingly insinuates, that the only consideration that can reconcile a man to confine himself by marriage to one woman, and a woman to one man, is this, that nothing hinders but that they may indulge their desires with others.† This is the same as accusing the whole human race of incontinency, and denying that there is any such thing as conjugal fidelity; a plain proof that whoever was clear of this indecent charge, Lord Bolingbroke was not. Mr. Hume, who has written a volume on the principles of morality, scruples not to stigmatize self-denial as a "monkish virtue;" and adopts the opinion of a French writer, that "adultery must be practised if we would obtain all the advantages of life; that female infidelity, when known, is a small thing, and when unknown, nothing." These writers will, on some occasions, descant in favour of chastity, as being conducive to health and reputation; but on others they seldom fail to apologize for the contrary, and that under the pretence of indulging the dictates of nature. Yet the same things might be alleged in behalf of oppression, revenge, theft, duelling, ambitious war, and a thousand other vices which desolate the earth; they are practices which men, placed in certain circumstances, will feel themselves prompted to commit: nor is there a vice that can be named but what would admit of such an apology.

Finally: It is one thing for the light of nature to be so clear as to render idolatry, impiety, and injustice, inexcusable; and another thing to render the *whole will* of our Creator evident, and in the most *advantageous manner*. If a person, possessed of only the light of nature, were ever so sincerely desirous of knowing God; or grieved for the sins of which his conscience accused him; or attached to the holy, the just, and the good; or disposed to obey his Creator's will if he did but understand it; though he should be in no danger of confounding the dictates of nature with those of corrupt propensity, yet he must labour under great disadvantages; which, allowing they might not affect his eternal state, yet would greatly injure his present peace and usefulness. To illustrate

* Leland's Review, &c. Vol. I. Let. I. † Works, Vol. V. p. 167.

this remark, let us suppose the inhabitants of a province to throw off the government of a just and lawful prince. Being once engaged, they may feel themselves impelled to go forward. They may choose new rulers, and use all possible means to efface every sign and memorial of the authority of their ancient sovereign. They may even labour to forget, and teach their children to forget, if possible, that there ever was such a character in being, to whom they owed allegiance. Yet, after all, there may be certain traces and memorials of his government which it is not in their power to efface. Yea, there may be continued instances of forbearance and clemency, which, in spite of all their efforts, will bear witness of his goodness and just authority over them. Thus it was that God, while he *suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless* LEFT NOT HIMSELF WITHOUT A WITNESS, *in that he did good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.* But, as the memorials of just authority, in the one case, though sufficient to leave the rebellious without excuse, would not contain a *full* expression of the prince's will, nor be conveyed in so *advantageous* a manner as that in which he treated his professed subjects; so the light afforded by the works of nature and the continued goodness of God, in the other, though sufficient to leave the world without excuse, does not express his *whole* will, nor convey what it does express so *advantageously* as by revelation. And, as an individual residing in the midst of the rebellious province, whose heart might relent, and who might long to return to his allegiance, would be under inexpressible disadvantages, so it must necessarily be with a heathen whose desire should be towards the God against whom he had sinned.

The amount is, that modern unbelievers have no standard of morals, except it be their own inclinations. Morality with them is any thing or nothing, as convenience requires. On some occasons they will praise that of Jesus Christ: but ere we can have time to ask them, Why then do you not submit to it? they are employed in opposing it. Attend to their general declamations in favour of virtue, and you will be ready to imagine they are its warmest friends: but follow them up, and observe their exposition of particular precepts, and you will be convinced that they

are its decided enemies; applauding in the gross that which they are ever undermining in detail.

By the foolish and discordant accounts which these writers give of morality, it should seem that they know not what it is. Every new speculator is dissatisfied with the definition of his predecessor, and endeavours to mend it. "Virtue," says Lord Shaftesbury, "is a sense of beauty, of harmony, of order, and proportion, an affection towards the whole of our kind, or species." "It is," says Lord Bolingbroke, "only the love of *ourselves*." "It is every thing that tends to preserve the perfect man," says Volney; and as "good reputation" has this tendency, it is, in his account, "a moral good."* "It is whatever is useful in society," says Mr. Hume; and as "health, cleanliness, facility of expression, broad shoulders, and taper legs," are of use, they are to be reckoned among the virtues. To this might be added, a *large portion of effrontery*, as the last named writer assures us, (it may be from his own experience,) that "nothing carries a man through the world like a true, genuine natural impudence."† Mr. Paine brings up the rear, and informs us, "It is *doing justice, loving mercy, and* . . . . endeavouring to make our fellow creatures happy." Oh Paine! had you but for once suffered yourself to be taught by a Prophet, and have quoted his words as they stand, you would, undoubtedly, have borne away the palm: but you had rather write nonsense than say any thing in favour of *godliness*.

It is worthy of notice, that amidst all the discordance of these writers, they agree in excluding the Divine being from their theory of morals. They think after their manner; but *God is not in all their thoughts*. In comparing the Christian doctrine of morality, the sum of which is love, with their atheistical Jargon, one seems to hear the voice of the Almighty saying, *Who is this that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge? Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man.*

* Law of Nature, p. 17.

† Enquiry concerning the principles of Morals, § 6, 7, 8. Essays Moral and Political, Essay III. p. 15.

The words of scripture are spirit and life. They are the language of love. Every exhortation of Christ and his apostles is impregnated with this spirit. Let the reader turn to the 12th chapter to the Romans, for an example, and read it carefully; let him find, if he can, any thing, in the purest part of the writings of Deists, that is worthy of being compared with it. No; virtue itself is no longer virtue in their hands. It loses its charms when they affect to embrace it. Their touch is that of the cold hand of death. The most lovely object is deprived by it of life and beauty, and reduced to a shrivelled mass of inactive formality.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY FURNISHES MOTIVES TO A VIRTUOUS LIFE; WHICH DEISM EITHER REJECTS, OR ATTEMPTS TO UNDERMINE.

So long as our adversaries profess a regard to virtue, and, with Lord Bolingbroke,* acknowledge that "the gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity," they must allow those to be the best principles which furnish the most effectual motives for reducing it to practice.

Now, there is not a doctrine in the whole compass of Christianity but what is improveable to this purpose. It is a grand peculiarity of the gospel, that none of its principles are merely speculative: each is pregnant with a practical use. Nor does the discovery of it require any extraordinary degree of ingenuity: real Christians, however weak as to their natural capacities, have always been taught by the gospel of Christ, that *denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.*

Ancient philosophers have taught many things in favour of morality, so far at least as respects justice and goodness towards our fellow-creatures; but where are the motives by which the minds of the people, or even their own minds, have been moved to a compliance with them? They framed a curious machine: but who among them could discover a power to work it? What principles have appeared in the world, under the names either of philosophy or religion, that can bear a comparison with the following? *God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son*

* Works, Vol. V. p. 129.

that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—Be ye therefore followers (or imitators) *of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour.—Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.—Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.—Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. —If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy:—be of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul: having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirits which are God's.—The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.—The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall*

be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God!—Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. —To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

These are motives by which Christians in every age, have been induced to practice that morality which, while writing against Christianity, Paine, Bolingbroke, and many others have been compelled to applaud. But the far greater part of them are rejected by Deists; and what will they substitute, of equal efficacy, in their place? The love of Christ constraineth *us*, but what have they to constrain *them?* Will self-love, or the beauty or utility of virtue answer the purpose? Let history and observation determine.

It may be alleged, however, that Deists do not reject the *whole* of these important motives; for that some, at least, admit the doctrine of *a future life*, which, with the acknowledgment of one living and true God, may be thought sufficient for all the purposes of morality.

That the doctrine of a future life is of great importance in the moral system, is allowed; but the greatest truth, if dissevered from other truths of equal importance, will be divested of its energy. As well might a hand dissevered from the body be represented as sufficient for the purposes of labour, as one or two unconnected principles for the purposes of morality. This is actually the case in the present instance. The doctrine of a future life, as held by Christians, has stimulated them to labour and suffer without intermission. From a *respect to this recompense of reward*, a kingdom had been refused, where the acceptance of it would have interfered with a good conscience. Yea, life itself has been sacrificed, and that not in a few, but in innumerable instances, where it could not be retained but at the expense of truth and uprightness. But is it thus among Deists? Does the doctrine of a future life as held by them, produce any such effects? When was it known, or heard, that they sacrificed any thing for this, or any

other principle of a moral nature? Who among them ever thought of such a thing; or who expected it at their hands?

But this is not all: there is such a connexion in truth, that if one part of it be given up, it will render us less friendly towards other parts, and so destroy their efficacy. This also is actually the case in the present instance. Our adversaries do not cordially embrace even this truth; but on the contrary, are continually undermining it, and rendering it of no effect. Lord Herbert, it is true, considered it as an essential article of natural religion; and it was his opinion, that he could scarcely be accounted a reasonable creature who denied it: but this is far from being the case with later deistical writers; the greater part of whom either deny it, or represent it as a matter of doubt. Some of them disown every principle by which it is supported, and others go so far as to hold it up to ridicule, labouring withal to prove the hope of it unfriendly to the disinterested love of virture. Volney, in his *Law of Nature, or Catechism for French Citizens*, says nothing about it. Paine just touches upon it, in his *Age of Reason*, by informing us that "he *hopes* for happiness beyond this life:" but, as happiness has its counterpart, and stands upon the general doctrine of *retribution*, he is afraid to say he *believes* it. It must be reduced to a mere matter of "probability," lest the thoughts of it should damp him in his present pursuits, and render him "the slave of terror."* Bolingbroke, though he acknowledges its antiquity, and great utility in promoting virtue, yet represents it as a "mere invention of philosophers, and legislators," and as being "originally an hypothesis, and which may, therefore, be a vulgar error." "Reason," he says, "will neither affirm nor deny a future state." By this the reader might be led to expect that this writer was neither for it nor against it; yet the whole of his reasonings are directed to undermine it.† Hume, like the writer last mentioned, acknowledges the utility of the doctrine, but questions its truth. He would not have people disabused, or delivered from such a prejudice, because it would free them from one restraint

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 1. *Part* II. pp. 100, 101.

† Works, Vol. V.

upon their passions. Any person who should undertake this work, he allows, would be a bad citizen; yet he might, for aught he knows, be a good reasoner.* Shaftesbury employs all his wit and satire in endeavouring to raise a laugh at the very idea, representing the heathen world as very happy till Christianity arose and teazed them about an hereafter. "A new sort of policy," he says, "which extends itself to another world, and considers the future lives and happiness of man rather than the present, has made us leap beyond the bounds of natural humanity, and out of a supernatural charity has taught us the way of plaguing one another most devoutly." †

Lord Shaftesbury's wit may very well be passed by, as being what it is: in connexion with the foregoing quotations, it suffices to show us what efficacy the doctrines of a future life, as held by Deists, may be expected to possess. But this writer is not contented with raillery: he must also attempt to *reason* against the doctrine; contending that it has a pernicious influence on the morals of men; that it is a mercenary principle, and opposed to the disinterested love of virtue, for its own sake. "The principle of self-love," he observes, "which is naturally so prevailing in us, is improved and made stronger by the exercise of the passions on a subject of more extended interest: and there may be reason to apprehend that a temper of this kind will extend itself through all the parts of life. And this has a tendency to create a stricter attention to self-good and private interest, and must insensibly diminish the affection towards public good, or the interest of society, and introduce a certain narrowness of spirit, which is observable in the devout persons and zealots of almost every religious persuasion." ‡

This objection, the reader will recollect, is in direct contradiction to the principles of Bolingbroke, and, it may be added, of Volney, and other deistical writers, who maintain self-love to be the origin of virtuous affection. Some Christian writers, in an-

* Philosophical Essays, p. 231. † Characteristics, Vol. I. p. 18.

‡ Characteristics, Vol. II. p. 58.

swering it, have given up the doctrine of disinterested love, allowing that all religious affection is to be traced to the love which we bear to ourselves, as its first principle. To me, this appears no other than betraying the truth, and ranking Christianity with every species of apostacy and false religion which have at any time prevailed in the world. A clear idea of the nature of self-love, if I mistake not, will enable us to determine this question; and to answer the deistical objection without rendering Christianity a mercenary system.

Every man may be considered either singly, or connectedly; either as a being by himself, or as a link in a certain chain of beings. Under one or other of these views every man considers himself, while pursuing his own interest. If the former, this is to make himself the ultimate end of his actions, and to love all other beings, created or uncreated, only as they subserve his interest or his pleasure: this is private self-love: this is mean and mercenary, and what we commonly understand by the term *selfishness*. But if the latter, there is nothing mean or selfish in it. He who seeks his own well-being in connexion with the general good, seeks it as he ought to do. No man is required directly to oppose his own welfare, though, in some instances, he may be required to sacrifice it for the general good. Neither is it necessary that he should be indifferent towards it. Reason, as well as scripture, requires us to love ourselves as we love our neighbour. To this may be added, every man is not only a link in the chain of intelligent beings, and so deserving of some regard from himself, as well as from others, but every man's person, family, and connexions, and still more the concerns of his soul, are, as it were, his own vineyard, over the interests of which it is his peculiar province to exercise a watchful care. Only let the care of himself and his immediate connexions be in subserviency to the general good, and there is nothing mercenary in it.

I need not multiply arguments to prove that the doctrine of *rewards* does not necessarily tend to encourage a mercenary spirit, or that it is consistent with the disinterested love of virtue. Lord Shaftesbury himself has acknowledged this: "If by the hope of reward," he says, "be understood the love and desire of vir-

tuous enjoyment, or of the very practice or exercise of virtue in another life, the expectation or hope of this kind is so far from being derogatory to virtue, that it is an evidence of our loving it the more sincerly, and for its own sake." * This single concession contains an answer to all which his lordship has advanced on the subject: for the rewards promised in the gospel are all exactly of the description which he mentions. It is true, they are often represented under the images of earthly things; but this does not prove that, in themselves they are not pure and spiritual. That there is nothing in them adapted to gratify a mercenary spirit, the following observations will render plain to the meanest capacity.

First: The nature of heavenly enjoyments is such as to admit of no monopoly, and consequently to leave no room for the exercise of private self-love. Like the beams of the sun, they are equally adapted to give joy to a world as to an individual: nay, so far is an increase in the number of the participants from diminishing the quantum of happiness possessed by each individual, that it has a tendency to increase it. The interest of one is the interest of all; and the interest of all extends to every one.

Secondly: The sum of heavenly enjoyments consists in a holy likeness to God, and in the eternal enjoyment of his favour.† But holy likeness to God is the same thing as "the very practice or exercise of virtue," the hope of which, Lord Shaftesbury acknowledges, "is so far from being derogatory to it, that it is an evidence of our loving it the more sincerely, and for its own sake." And as to the enjoyment of the divine favour, a proper pursuit of this object, instead of being at variance with disinterested affection, clearly *implies* it; for no man can truly desire the favour of God as his chief good, without a proportionate esteem of his character, and that for its own excellency. It is impossible that the favour of any being whose character we disapprove should be sought as our chief good, in preference to every other object in the universe. But a cordial approbation of the divine character is the same thing as a disinterested affection to virtue.

* Characteristics. Vol. II. pp. 65, 66. † 1 John iii. 2. Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

Thirdly: The only method by which the rewards of the gospel are attainable, faith in Christ, secures the exercise of disinterested and enlarged virtue. No man has any warrant, from the scriptures, to expect an interest in the promises of the gospel, unless he cordially acquiesce in his mediation. But to acquiesce in this is to acquiesce in the holy government of God, which it was designed to glorify; to feel and acknowledge that we deserved to have been made sacrifices to divine displeasure; to forego all claim or hope of mercy from every selfish consideration; and to be willing to receive forgiveness as an act of mere grace, and along with the chief of sinners. In fine, to acquiesce in this is to be of one heart with the Saviour of sinners, which, our adversaries themselves being judges, is the same thing as to be filled with devotedness to God and benevolence to men; and this, if any thing deserves that name, is true, disinterested, and enlarged virtue.

It is very possible, that the objections which are made by this writer, as well as by Mr. Paine and others, against the doctrine of *rewards*, as being servile and mercenary, may, after all, in reality be against their *counterpart*. It does not appear to be "the hope of happiness beyond this life" that excites their disgust, though the nature of the Christian's happiness might be disagreeable to them; but the fear of being "called to account for the manner in which they have lived in this world." This it is which even the daring author of *The Age of Reason* cannot endure to consider as a certainty, as the thought of it would render him "the slave of terror." Yet, as though he would not have it thought that the dread of futurity rendered him affraid of believing it, he alleges another reason: "our belief, on this principle," he says, "would have no merit, and our best actions no virtue."* In order then to our actions being virtuous, it is necessary, it seems, that we be under no law but that of our own inclination; and this will be loving virtue *for its own sake*. This is at once shaking off the divine authority; which if it could be accomplished, might be very agreeable to some men; and if with this they could get fairly rid of a judg-

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. pp. 100, 101.

ment to come, it might be still more agreeable; but alas, if they should be mistaken!

It is a fact, that the passions of hope and fear are planted in our nature by Him who made us; and it may be presumed they are not planted there in vain. The proper exercise of the former has, I conceive, been proved to be consistent with the purest and most disinterested love; and the same thing is proveable of the latter. The hope and fear against which these writers declaim are those of a slave; and where love is absent, these, it is granted, are the only effects which the doctrine of rewards and punishments will produce. But even here they have their use. Terror is the grand principle by which vicious minds are kept in awe. Without this their licentiousness would be intolerable to society. It is not, however, for the mere purpose of restraint that threatenings are exhibited, but to express the displeasure of God against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and his resolution to punish them. Some are hereby taught the evil of their ways to a good purpose, and all are fairly warned, and their perseverance in sin is rendered inexcusable.

Before our adversaries object to this, they should show the impropriety of human laws being accompanied with penalties. Let them furnish us with a system of government in which men may be guilty of crimes without fear of being called to account for them; and in which those who are enemies to virtue are to be governed by merely the love of it. If it be improper to threaten sinners, it is improper to punish them; and if it be improper to punish them, it is improper for moral government to be exercised. But if it be thus in the government of God, there is no good reason to be given why it should not be the same in human governments; that is, there is no good reason why servants, unless they choose to do otherwise, should not disobey their masters, children their parents, and private individuals in a state be continually rising up to destroy all just authority.

The above may suffice to ascertain the weight of Lord Shaftesbury's objections to the doctrine of rewards; and now I shall take the liberty to retort the charge, and attempt to prove that the

epithets "narrow and selfish," which he applies to the Christian system, properly belong to his own.

In his *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, contained in the second volume of his *Characteristics*, though he allows it to consist in our being proportionably affected towards the whole system to which we bear a relation ; (p. 17.) and that this world may be only a part of a more extended system ; (p. 20.) yet he studiously leaves out God as the head of it. Among all the *relations* which he enumerates, there is no mention of that between the creature and the Creator. His enlarged and disinterested scheme of morality is at last nothing more than for a creature to regard those "of its own kind, or species:" Not only is all gentleness, kindness, and compassion to inferior creatures left out, but the love of God is not in it. On the contrary, it is the professed object of his *Inquiry*, to prove that virtue, goodness, or moral excellence, may exist without religion, and even "in an Atheist." (p. 6.) In short, it is manifest that it is the love of God, and not self-love, to which his love of virtue, *for its own sake*, stands opposed. That for which he pleads is the impious spirit of a child, who disregarding his father's favour, pays no attention to his commands, *as his commands ;* but complies with them only on account of their approving themselves to his own mind. But this is no other than self-will, which instead of being opposed to self love, is one of its genuine exercises.

"Our holy religion," says this sneering writer, takes but little notice of the most heroic virtues, such as zeal for the public, and our country."* That Christianity takes but little notice of what is commonly called *patriotism*, is admitted ; and if Lord Shaftesbury had been free from that narrowness of mind" which it is his intention here to censure ; yea, if he had only kept to his own definition of virtue—"a regard to those of our own kind, or species," he would have taken as little. By the public good, he evidently means no more than the temporal prosperity of a particular country ; which is to be sought at the expense of all other countries with whom it happens, justly or unjustly, to be at variance

* Characteristics, Vol. I. pp. 98, 99.

Christianity, we acknowledge, knows nothing of this spirit. It is superior to it. It is not natural for a Christian to enter into the antipathies, or embroil himself in the contentions of a nation, however he may be occasionally drawn into them. His soul is much more in its element when breathing after the present and future happiness of a world. In undertakings, both public and private, which tend to alleviate the miseries, and enlarge the comforts of human life, Christians have ever been foremost: and when they have conceived themselves lawfully called even into the field of battle, they have not been wanting in valour. But the heroism to which they principally aspire is of another kind: it is that of subduing their own spirit, doing good against evil, seeking the present and eternal well-being of those who hate them, and laying down their lives if required, for the name of the Lord Jesus.

Such is the "narrow spirit" of Christians; and such have been their "selfish pursuits." But these are things which do not emblazon their names in the account of unbelievers. The murderers of mankind will be applauded before them. But they have enough: their blood is precious in the sight of the Lord, and their names are enbalmed in the memory of the upright.

CHAPTER V.

THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO REJECT THE GOSPEL WILL NOT BEAR A COMPARISON WITH THEIRS WHO EMBRACE IT.

No books are so plain as the lives of men ; no characters so legible as their moral conduct. If the principles of a body of men will not bear this criterion, we may expect to hear them exclaim against it as unfair, and uncertain ; but when they have said all, they will endeavour to avail themselves of it, if possible. It is thus that the virtues of idolaters are the constant theme of deistical panegyric ; and all the corruptions, intrigues, persecutions, wars, and mischiefs, which of late ages have afflicted the earth, are charged to the account of Christians. It is thus that Christian ministers under the name of *priests*, are described as mercenary, designing, and hypocritical ; and the lives of hectoring profligates praised in comparison of them.* In short, it is thus that Christians are accused of fanaticism, affectation, ingratitude, presumption, and almost every thing else that is mean and base ; and men are persuaded to become deists, with an assurance that, by so doing, they will " live more consistently, and morally, than by any other system.†

But let us examine whether these representations accord with fact. Is it fact, that the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome were virtuous characters ? It is true, that like the Deists, they talked and wrote much about virtue ; and if the latter may be believed, they were very virtuous. " They opposed each other," says Voltaire, " in their dogmas ; but in morality they were all

* Hume's Essays Moral and Political, Essay XXIV.

† Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 21.

agreed." After loading each of them with encomiums, he sums up by affirming, "There has been no philosopher in all antiquity who has not been desirous of making men better."* This is a very favorable report; and, if well founded, the writer of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans must not only have dealt largely in calumny, but have possessed the most consummate effrontery, to address such an epistle to the citizens of Rome, who from their own knowledge must have been able to contradict him. There are other reports, however, of a very different complexion.

It is no part of my design to enter minutely into this subject; nor is it necessary. Many able writers have proved, from the most authentic sources of information, that the account given of the heathens by the Apostle is not exaggerated. An extract or two from their writings will be sufficient for my purpose.

"Epictetus bids you *temporize, and worship the gods after the fashion of your country.*† Pythagoras forbids you to *pray to God, because you know not what is convenient.*‡ Plutarch commends Cato Uticencis, for killing himself amidst philosophic thoughts, with resolution and deliberation, after reading Plato on the immortality of the soul.§ Cicero pleads for self-murder. Herein he was seconded by Brutus, Cassius, and others who practised it. Many of their learned men applauded their opinion and practice. Seneca thus pleads for it: 'If thy mind be melancholy and in misery, thou mayest put a period to this wretched condition: wherever thou lookest, there is an end to it. See that precipice; there thou mayest have liberty. Seest thou that sea, that river, that well? Liberty is at the bottom of it: that little tree? freedom hangs upon it: thy own neck, thy own throat may be a refuge to thee from such servitude; yea, every vein of thy body.'‖

We may find in the heathen philosophers, customary swearing commended, if not by their precepts, yet by the examples of their best moralists, Plato, Socrates, Seneca, and Julian the emperor; in whose works numerous oaths, by Jupiter, Hercules, the Sun,

* Ignorant Philosopher, p. 60. † Enchiridon, Cap. 38. p. m. 56.

‡ Diog. Laertius. § Plutarch's Life of Cato, near the end.

‖ De ira, Lib. 3. Cap. 15. p. m. 319.

Serapis, and the like, do occur. In the same manner we see the unnatural love of boys recommended.* Aristippus maintained *that it was lawful for a wise man to steal, commit adultery, and sacrilege, when opportunity offered; for that none of these actions were naturally evil, setting aside the vulgar opinion which was introduced into the world by silly and illiterate people—that a wise man might publicly, without shame or scandal, keep company with common harlots, if his inclinations led him to it.* 'May not a beautiful woman be made use of,' he asks, 'because she is fair; or a youth because he is lovely? *Certainly they may.*' "†

If, as Voltaire asserts, it was the desire of these philosophers to make men better, assuredly they employed very extraordinary means to accomplish their desire.

What are the lives recorded by Plutarch? Many of them, no doubt, entertained a high sense of honour, and possessed a large portion of patriotism. But were either of these morality? If by this term be meant such dispositions of the mind as are right, fit, and amiable, it was not. Their sense of honour was not of that kind which made them scorn to do evil; but like the false honour of modern duellists, consisted merely in a dread of disgrace. It induced many of them to carry about them the fatal means of self-destruction: and rather than fall into the hands of an adversary, to make use of them. And as to their patriotism, generally speaking, it operated not merely in the preservation of their country, but in endeavours to extend and aggrandize it at the expense of other nations. It was a patriotism inconsistent with justice and good will to men. Add to this, that fornication, adultery, and unnatural crimes, were common among them.

As to the moral state of society among heathens, both ancient and modern, we may have occasion to consider this a little more particularly hereafter. At present I would inquire, Is it fact that the persecutions, intrigues, wars, and mischiefs of late ages, are to be charged to the account of Christianity?

* Juvenal Satyr. II. ver. 10.

† Diog. Laertius, Vol. I. p. m 165, 166. See in Millar's History of the Propagation of Christianity, Vol. I. p. 63—65.

With regard to *persecution*, nothing is more common with our adversaries than to lay it wholly at our door. They are continually alleging that the heathens all agreed to tolerate each other till Christianity arose. Thus writes Shaftesbury,* Hume,† Voltaire,‡ Gibbon,§ and Paine.‖ That the heathen tolerated each other before the introduction of Christianity, is allowed; and they did the same after it. It was not against each other that their enmity was directed. In the diversity of their idols, and modes of worship, there were indeed *different administrations*, *but* it was *the same lord*; whereas in the religion of Jesus Christ, there was nothing that could associate with heathenism, but every thing that threatened its utter subversion.

It is allowed also that individual persecution, except in a few instances, commenced with Christianity: but who began the practice? Was it Jesus that persecuted Herod and Pontius Pilate; or they him? Did Peter and James and John and Paul set up for inquisitors, and persecute the Jews and Romans; or the Jews and Romans them? Did the primitive Christians discover any disposition to persecute? By whom was Europe deluged with blood in ten successive persecutions during the first three centuries; Were Christians the authors of this? When the church had so far degenerated as to imbibe many of the principles and superstitions of the heathen, then indeed it began to imitate their persecuting spirit; but not before. When Christ's kingdom was transformed into a kingdom of this world, the weapons of its warfare might be expected to become carnal, and to be no longer, as formerly *mighty through God.*

The religious persecutions among Christians have been compared to the massacres attending the French Revolution in the time of Robespierre. The horrid barbarities of the latter, it has been said by way of apology, "have not even been equal to those of the former." If Deists may be allowed to confound Christianity and Popery, I shall not dispute the justness of the comparison. There is, no doubt, a great resemblance between the papal and the Infidel spirit; or rather they are one. Both are the spirit of this

* Characteristics, Vol. I. p. 18. † Essay on Parties.

‡ Ignorant Philosopher, p. 83 § History of Dec. Chap. II. p. 20.

‖ Age of Reason, *Part* II. *Preface.*

world, which is averse from true religion. The difference between them is but as that between the wolf and the tiger.* But those who reason thus, should prove that the reformers in religion have been guilty of excesses equal to those of the deistical reformers in politics. Were there any such assassinations among the Protestants towards one another, or towards the Papists, as have been wantonly committed by Infidels? It is true, there were examples of persecution among Protestants, and such as will ever remain a dishonour to the parties concerned; but those which affected the lives of men were few in number compared with the other, and those few, censurable as they are, were not performed by assassinations.

Mr. Paine affirms that, "all sects of Christians, except the Quakers, have persecuted in their turn." That much of this spirit has prevailed is too true: but this assertion is unfounded. I could name more denominations than one, whose hands, I believe, were never stained with blood, and whose avowed principles have always been in favour of Universal liberty of conscience.

But let us inquire into the principles and spirit of our adversaries on this subject. It is true that almost all their writers have defended the cause of liberty, and levelled their censures against persecution. But where is the man that is not an enemy to this practice, when it is directed against himself? have they discovered a proper regard to the rights of conscience among Christians? This is the question. There may be individuals among them who have; but the generality of their writers discover a shameful partiality in favour of their own side, and a contemptuous disregard of all who have suffered for the name of Christ. While they exhibit persecution in its deservedly infamous colours, they as constantly hold up the persecuted, *if found among Christians*, in a disadvantageous point of view. Mr. Hume allows, that "the

* The resemblance between Popery and Infidelity is pointed out with great beauty and energy in a piece which has ap peared in some of the periodical publications, entitled, The progress of the moderns, in knowledge, refinement, and virtue. See Theological Magazine, Vol. I. No. V. p. 344. Evangelical Magazine, Vol. IV. p. 405.

persecution of Christians in the early ages were cruel;" but lays the blame chiefly on themselves :* and all through his *history of England* he palliates the conduct of the persecutors, and represents the persecuted in an unfavourable light. The same may be said of Gibbon, in his *History of the decline of the Roman Empire;* of Shaftesbury in his *Characteristics;* and indeed of the generality of deistical writers. Voltaire, boasting of the wisdom and moderation of the ancient Romans, says, "They never persecuted a single philosopher for his opinions, from the time of Romulus, till the Popes got possession of their powers "† But did they not persecute Christians? The millions of lives that fell a sacrifice in the first three centuries after the Christian era, are considered as nothing by Voltaire. The benevolence of this apostle of deism feels not for men if they happen to be believers in Christ. If an Aristotle, a Pythagoras, or a Galileo suffer for their opinions, they are "martyrs :" but if a million of French Protestants, "from a desire to bring back things to the primitive institutes of the church," endure the most cruel treatment, or quit their country to escape it, they, according to this writer, are "weak and obstinate men." Say, reader, are these men friends to religous liberty? To what does all their declamations against persecution amount but this—that such of them who reside in Christianized countries wish to enjoy their opinions without being exposed to it.

Till of late Deists have been in the minority in all the nations of Europe, and have therefore felt the necessity of a free enjoyment of opinion. It is not what they have pleaded under those circumstances, but their conduct when in power, that must prove them friends to religious liberty. Few men are known to be what they are till they are tried. They and Protestant Dissenters, have, in some respects been in a similar situation. Of late, each, in a different country, have become the majority, and the civil power has been intrusted in their hands. The descendants of the Puritans, in the western world, by dispensing the blessings of liberty even to Episcopalians, by whose persecutions their

* Essay on Parties in general. † Ignorant Philosopher, pp. 82, 83.

ancestors were driven from their native shores, have shown themselves worthy of the trust. But have the Deists acted thus in France and other countries which have fallen into their hands? It is true, we believe them to have been the instruments in the hand of God, of destroying the papal Antichrist; and in this view we rejoice: howbeit they meant not so. If we judge of their proceedings towards the Catholics in the ordinary way of judging of human actions, which undoubtedly we ought, I fear it will be found not only persecuting, but perfidious and bloody in the extreme.

I am not without hope that liberty of conscience will be preserved in France; and if it should, it will be seen whether the subversion of the national establishment will prove, what the advisers of that measure without doubt expected, and what others who abhorred it apprehended—the extinction of Christianity. It may prove the reverse, and issue in things which will more than balance all the ills attending the Revolution. These hopes, however, are not founded on an idea of the just or tolerant spirit of infidelity; but, so far as human motives are concerned, on that regard to *consistency* which is known to influence all mankind. If the leading men in France, after having so liberally declaimed against persecution, should ever enact laws in favour of it, or in violation of the laws encourage it, they must appear in a most disgraceful light in the opinion of the whole civilized world.

Not only persecution, but *unjust wars*, *intrigues*, and other mischiefs, are placed to the acccount of Christianity. That such things have existed, and that men who are called Christians have been deeply concerned in them, is true. Wicked men will act wickedly, by whatever name they are called. Whether these things be fairly attributable to the Christian religion, may be determined by a few plain inquiries.

First: Did these evils commence with Christianity, or have they increased under its influence? Has not the world, in every age with which history acquaints us, been a scene of corruption, intrigue tumult, and laughter? All that can plausibly be objected to Christianity is, that these things have continued in the world *not-*

withstanding its influence; and that they have been practiced in as great a degree by men calling themselves Christians as by any other persons.

Secondly: Are those who ordinarily engage in these practices real Christians; and do our adversaries themselves account them so? They can distinguish, when they please, between sincere and merely nominal Christians. They need not be told that great numbers, in every nation, are of that religion which happens to prevail at the time; or rather, that they are of no religion.

Thirdly: Have not the courts of princes, notwithstanding Christianity may have been the professed religion of the land, been generally attended by a far greater proportion of Deists than of serious Christians; and have not public measures been directed by the counsels of the former much more than by those of the latter? It is well known that great numbers among the nobility and gentry of every nation consider religion as suited only to vulgar minds; and therefore either wholly absent themselves from worship, or attend but seldom, and then only to save appearances towards a national establishment, by which provision is made for the younger branches of their families. In other words, they are unbelievers. This is the description of men by whom public affairs are commonly managed; and to whom the good or the evil pertaining to them, so far as human agency is concerned, is to be attributed.

Finally: Great as have been the evils abounding in nations professing Christianity, (and great they have been, and ought greatly to be deplored,) can unbelievers pretend to have given us any hope, at present, of the state of things being meliorated? It is true, they have talked and written much in this way; and many well-wishers to the human race have been disposed to give them credit. But it is not words that will prove any thing. Have they *done* any thing that justifies a hope of reformation? No, they themselves, must first be reformed; or rather to use an appropriate term of their own, *regenerated*. Far be it from me, that, in such a cause as this, I should write under the influence of national prejudice, or side with the enemies of civil and religious freedom: but I must say, there never was a representation more necessary than

that which was given in an Address from the Executive Directory of France to the Five Hundred, about the beginning of the year 1796. In this address, they "request the most earnest attention of the Council towards adopting some measure for the *regeneration* of the public morals." This is the regeneration wanted, and which, having rejected Christianity, they may be ever seeking, but will never be able to obtain. They may continue to revolutionize as long as a party shall be found that wishes for an increase of power, and perceives an opportunity of gaining it; and every party in its turn may talk of "saving liberty:" but never will they be *free indeed* until they are emancipated in some good degree from the dominion of vice; and never will this be effected but by a knowledge of evangelical truth.

The friends of legitimate liberty have deeply to regret, that under that revered name has been perpetrated almost every species of atrocity; and that not only towards individuals, but nations, and nations the most peaceable and inoffensive, whose only crime was that of being unable to resist. Liberty has suffered more from the hands of Infidels, amidst all their successes and declamations, than from its professed enemies; and still it bleeds beneath their wounds. Without entering into political disputes, I may safely affirm that if ever the nations of the earth be blessed with equal liberty, it will be by the prevalence, not of the pretended illuminations of infidel philosophy, but of that doctrine which teaches us *to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us.*

Finally: Mr. Paine affirms, that men, by becoming Deists, would "live more consistently and morally than by any other system." As to living more *consistently*, it is possible there may be some truth in it: for the best Christians, it must be allowed, have many imperfections, which are but so many inconsistencies; whereas, by complying with this advice, they would be uniformly wicked. And as to their living more *morally*, if Mr. Paine could coin a new system of morals, from which the love of God should be excluded, and intemperance, incontinency, pride, profane swearing, cursing, lying, and hypocrisy, exalted, to the rank of virtues, he might very probably make good his assertion

Mr. Paine professes to "detest the Bible on account of its obscene stories, voluptuous debaucheries, cruel executions, and unrelenting vindictiveness."* That the Bible relates such things, is true; and every impartial history of mankind must do the same.

The question is, whether they be so related as to leave a favourable impression of them upon the mind of a serious reader. If so and if the Bible be that immoral book which Mr. Paine represents it to be, how is it that the reading of it should have reclaimed millions from immorality? Whether he will acknowledge this, or not, it is a fact too notorious to be denied by impartial observers. Every man residing in a Christian country will acknowledge, unless he have an end to answer in saying otherwise, that those people who read the Bible, believe its doctrines and endeavour to form their lives by its precepts, are the most sober, upright, and useful members of the community; and, on the other hand, that those who discredit the Bible, and renounce it as the rule of their lives, are generally speaking, addicted to the grossest vices; such as profane swearing, lying, drunkenness, and lewdness. It is very singular, I repeat it, that men, by regarding an immoral book, should learn to practice morality; and that others, by disregarding it, should learn the contrary.

How is it that, in countries where Christianity has made progress, men have almost universally agreed in reckoning a true Christian, and an amiable, open, modest, chaste, conscientious, and benevolent character, as the same thing? How is it also, that to say of a man, He rejects the Bible, is nearly the same thing, in the account of people in general, as to say, He is a man of a dissolute life? If there were not a general connexion between these things, public opinion would not so generally associate them. Individuals, and even parties, may be governed by prejudice; but public opinion of character is seldom far from truth. Besides, the prejudices of merely nominal Christians, so far as my observation extends, are equally strong, if not stronger, against those Christians who are distinguished by their devout and serious regard to the scriptures, than against professed Infidels. How is

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 12.

it then to be accounted for, that, although they will call them fanatics, enthusiasts, and other unpleasant names, yet it is very rare that they reckon them immoral? If, as is sometimes the case, they accuse them of unworthy motives, and insinuate that in secret they are as wicked as others, either such insinuations are not seriously believed, or, if they be, the party is considered as insincere in his profession. No man thinks that genuine Christianity consists with wicked life, open or secret. But the ideas of infidelity and immorality are associated in the public mind; and the association is clear and strong; so much so, as to become a ground of action. Whom do men ordinarily choose for umpires, trustees, guardians, and the like? Doubtless they endeavour to select persons of intelligence: but if to this be added *Christian principle*, is it not of weight in these cases; It is seldom known, I believe, but that a serious and intelligent Christian, whose situation in the world renders him conversant with his concerns, will have his hands full of employment. Ask bankers, merchants, tradesmen, and others, who are frequently looking out for persons of probity to occupy situations of trust, in whose hands they would choose to confide their property? They might object, and with good reason, to persons whose religion rendered them pert, conceited, and idle; but would they not prefer one who really makes the Bible the rule of his life, to one who professedly rejects it? The common practice in these cases affords a sufficient answer.

How is it that the principles and reasonings of Infidels, though frequently accompanied with great natural and acquired abilities, are seldom known to make any impression on sober people? Is it not because the men and their communications are known?* How

* It is said of a gentleman lately deceased, who was eminent in the literary world, that in early life he drank deeply into the free-thinking scheme. He and one of his companions, of the same turn of mind, often carried on their conversations in the hearing of a religious but illiterate countryman. This gentleman, afterwards becoming a serious Christian, was concerned for the countryman, lest his faith in the Christian religion should have been shaken. One day he took the liberty to ask him, Whether what had so frequently been advanced in his hearing had not produced this effect upon him? "By no means," answered the countryman, "it never made the least impression

is it that so much is made of the falls of Noah, Lot, David, Jonah, Peter, and others? The same things in heathen philosophers, or modern unbelievers, would be passed over without notice. All the declamations of our adversaries on these subjects plainly prove that such instances with us are more *singular* than with them. With us they are occasional, and afford matter for deep repentance; with them they are habitual, and furnish employment in the work of palliation. The spots on the garments of a child attract attention; but the filthy condition of the animal that wallows in the mire is disregarded, as being a thing of course.

The morality, such as it is, which is found among Deists, amounts to nothing more than a little exterior decorum. The criminality of *intention* is expressly disowned.* The great body of these writers pretend to no higher motives than a regard to their safety, interest or reputation. Actions proceeding from these principles must not only be destitute of virtue, but wretchedly defective as to their influence on the well-being of society. If the heart be towards God, a sober, righteous, and godly life, becomes a matter of choice; but that which is performed, not for its own sake, but from fear, interest, or ambition, will extend no farther than the eye of man can follow it. In domestic life it will be but little regarded, and in retirement not at all. Such, in fact, is the character of Infidels. "Will you dare to assert," says Linguet, a French writer, in an address to Voltaire, "that it is in philosophic families we are to look for models of filial respect, conjugal love, sincerity in friendship, or fidelity among domestics? Were you disposed to do so, would not your own conscience, your own experience, suppress the falsehood, even before your lips could utter it?†

upon me." "No impression upon you!" said the gentleman, "why, you must know that we had read and thought on these things much more than you had any opportunity of doing." "O yes," said the other, "but I knew also your manner of living: I knew that to maintain such a course of conduct, you found it *necessary* to renounce Christianity."

* Volney's Law of Nature, p. 18.

† Linguet was an admirer of Voltaire; but disapproved of his opposition to Christianity. See his *Review* of that author's Works, p. 264.

"Wherever society is established, there it is necessary to have religion: for religion, which watches over the crimes that are secret, is, in fact, the only law which a man carries about with him; the only one which places the punishment at the side of the guilt; and which operates as forcibly in solitude and darkness as in the broad and open face of day." Would the reader have thought it? These are the words of Voltaire!*

Nothing is more common than for deistical writers to level their artillery against the *Christian ministry*. Under the appellation of *priests*, they seem to think themselves at liberty to load them with every species of abuse. That there are great numbers of worldly men who have engaged in the Christian ministry, as other worldly men engage in other employments, for the sake of profit, is true; and where this is the case, it may be expected that hunting, gaming, and such kind of amusements, will be their favourite pursuits, while religious exercises will be performed as a piece of necessary drudgery. Where this is the case, "their devotion must be feigned, and their seriousness mere hypocrisy and grimace." But, that this should be represented as a general case, and that the ministry itself should be reproached on account of the hypocrisy of worldly men, who intrude themselves into it, can only be owing to malignity. Let the fullest subtraction be made of characters of the above description, and I appeal to impartial observation whether there will not still remain in only this particular order of Christians, and at almost any period, a greater number of serious, upright, disinterested, and benevolent persons, than could be found among the whole body of Deists in a succession of centuries.

It is worthy of notice, that Mr. Hume, in attempting to plunge Christian ministers into the mire of reproach, is obliged to descend himself, and to drag all mankind with him, into the same situation. He represents ministers as "drawn from the common mass of mankind as people are to other employments, by the views of profit;" and suggests that "therefore they are obliged, on many occasions, to feign more devotion than they possess," which is

* In Sullivan's Survey of Nature

friendly to hypocrisy.* The leading motives of all public officers, it seems is to aggrandize themselves. If Mr. Hume had accepted of a station under government, we can be at no loss, therefore, in judging what would have been his predominant principle. How weak, as well as wicked, must that man have been, who, in order to wound the reputation of one description of men, could point his arrows against the integrity of all! But the world must forgive him. He had no ill design against them, any more than against himself. It was for the purpose of destroying these Philistines, that he has aimed to demolish the temple of human virtue.

Nor is his antipathy, or that of his brethren, at all to be wondered at. These are the men who, in every age, have exposed the sophistry of Deists, and vindicated Christianity from their malicious aspersions. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that they will always be considered as their natural enemies. It is no more a matter of surprise that they should be the objects of their invective, than that the weapons of nightly depredators should be pointed against the watchmen, whose business it is to detect them, and expose their nefarious practices.

After all Mr. Hume pretends to respect "*clergymen*, who are set apart by the laws to the care of sacred matters;" and wishes to be understood as directing his censures only against *priests*, or those who pretend to power and dominion, and to a superior sanctity of character, distinct from virtue and good morals.† It should seem then, that they are *dissenting* ministers only that incur Mr. Hume's displeasure: but if, as he represents them, they be "drawn to their employment by the views of profit," they certainly cannot possess the common understanding of men, since they could scarcely pursue an occupation less likely to accomplish their design. The truth is, Mr. Hume did not mean to censure dissenting ministers only; nor did he feel any respect for clergymen set apart by the laws. Those whom he meant to spare were such clergymen as were men after his own heart; and the objects

* Essay on National Characters, Note.

† Essays Moral and Political, Essay XII. pp. 107, 108, Note.

of his dislike were truly evangelical ministers, whether churchmen or dissenters, who were not satisfied with *his* kind of morality, but were men of holy lives, and consequently were respected by the people. These are the men against whom the enmity of Deists has ever been directed. As to other priests, they have no other difference with them than that of rivalship, wishing to possess their wealth and influence, which the others are not always the most willing to relinquish. In professing, however, to "respect" such clergymen, Mr. Hume only means to flatter them, and draw them on to a little nearer alliance with his views. Respect is excited only by consistency of character and is frequently involuntary. A clergyman of loose morals may be preferred, and his company courted, but *repected* he cannot be.

As to those ministers against whom Mr. Hume levels his artillery, and against whom the real enmity of his party has always been directed, there is not a body of men in the world, of equal talents and industry, who receive less, if so little, for their labours. If those who have so liberally accused them of interested motives gained no more by their exertions than the accused, they would not be so wealthy as many of them are.

Compare the conduct of the leading men among Deists, with that of the body of serious Christian divines. Amidst their declamamations against priestly hypocrisy, are they honest men? Where is their ingenuousness in continually confounding Christianity and Popery? Have these workers of iniquity no knowledge? 'No,' say some, 'they do not understand the difference between genuine and corrupted Christianity. They have never had opportunity of viewing the religion of Jesus in its native dress. It is popish superstition against which their efforts are directed. If they understood Christianity they would embrace it.. Indeed? And was this the case with Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Hume, or Gibbon? or is this the case with Paine? No, they have both seen and hated the light; nor will they come to it, lest their deeds should be made manifest.

It may be thought, however, that some excuse may be made for Infidels residing in a popish country; and this I shall not dispute, as it respects the ignorant populace, who may be carried away by

their leaders; but as it respects the leaders themselves, it is otherwise. The National Assembly of France, when they wished to counteract the priests, and to reject the adoption of the Roman Catholic faith as the established religion, could clearly distinguish between genuine and corrupted Christianity.* Deists can distinguish between Christianity and its abuses, when an end is to be answered by it; and when an end is to be answered by it, they can, with equal facility, confound them.

"Herbert, Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Woolston, Tindal, Chubb, and Bolingbroke, are all guilty of the vile hypocrisy of professing to love and reverence Christianity, while they are employed in no other design than to destroy it. Such faithless professions, such gross violations of truth, in Christians, would have been proclaimed to the universe by these very writers, as infamous desertions of principle and decency. Is it less infamous in themselves? All hypocrisy is detestable; but I know of none so detestable as that which is coolly written, with full premeditation, by a man of talents, assuming the character of a moral and religious instructor. Truth is a virtue perfectly defined, mathematically clear, and completely understood by all men of common sense. There can be no haltings between uttering truth and falsehood; no doubt, no mistakes, as between piety and enthusiasm, frugality and parsimony, generosity and profusion. Transgression, therefore, is always a known, definite, deliberate villainy. In the sudden moment of strong temptation, in the hour of unguarded attack, in the flutter and trepidation of unexpected alarm, the best man may, perhaps, be surprised in to any sin: but he who can coolly, of steady design, and with no unusual impulse, utter falsehood, and vend hypocrisy, is not far from finished depravity."

"The morals of Rochester and Wharton need no comment. Woolston was a gross blasphemer. Blount solicited his sister-in-law to marry him, and being refused, shot himself. Tindal was originally a Protestant, then turned Papist, then Protestant again, merely to suit the times; and was at the same time infamous for vice in general, and the total want of principle. He is said to

* Mirabeau's Speeches, Vol. II. pp. 269—274.

have died with this prayer in his mouth, 'If there be a God, I desire that he may have mercy on me.' Hobbes wrote his *Leviathan* to serve the cause of Charles I. but finding him fail of success, he turned it to the defence of Cromwell, and made a merit of this fact to the usurper; as Hobbes himself unblushingly declared to Lord Clarendon. Morgan had no regard to truth, as is evident from his numerous falsifications of scripture, as well as from the vile hypocrisy of professing himself a Christian in those very writings in which he labours to destroy Christianity. Voltaire, in a Letter now remaining, requested his friend D'Alembert to tell for him a direct and palpable lie, by denying that he was the author of the Philosophical Dictionary. D'Alembert, in his answer, informed him that he had told the lie. Voltaire has, indeed, expressed his own moral character perfectly in the following words: 'Monsieur Abbe, I must be read, no matter whether I am believed or not.' He also solemnly professed to believe the Catholic religion, although at the same time he doubted the existence of a God. Hume died as a fool dieth. The day before his death he spent in a pitiful and affected unconcern about this tremendous subject, playing at whist, reading Lucian's Dialogues, and making silly attempts at wit, concerning his interview with Charon, the heathen ferry-man of Hades."*

Collins, though he had no belief in Christianity, yet qualified himself for civil office by partaking of the Lord's supper. Shaftesbury did the same: and the same is done by hundreds of Infidels to this day. Yet these are the men who are continually declaiming against the hypocrisy of priests! Godwin is not only a lewd character, by his own confession; but the unblushing advocate of lewdness. And as to Paine, he is well known to have been a profane swearer, and a drunkard. We have evidence upon oath that "religion was his favorite topic when intoxicated;"† and from the scurrility of the performance, it is not improbable that he was frequently in this situation while writing his *Age of Reason*.

* The last two paragraphs are taken from Dr. Dwight's excellent Discourses on The Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy, pp. 45—47.

† See Trial of T. Paine, at Guildhall, for a Libel, &c. p. 43.

I shall conclude this catalogue of worthies with a brief abstract of the *Confessions of J. J. Rousseau.* After a good education, in the Protestant religion, he was put apprentice. Finding his situation disagreeable to him, he felt a strong propensity to vice; inclining him to covet, dissemble, lie, and at length to steal; a propensity of which he was never able afterwards to divest himself. "I have been a rogue," says he, "and am so still sometimes, for trifles which I had rather take than ask for."*

He abjured the protestant religion, and entered the hospital of the Catechumens at Turin to be instructed in that of the Catholics; "For which in return," says he, "I was to receive subsistence. From this interested conversion," he adds, "nothing remained but the remembrance of my having been both a dupe and an apostate." †

After this, he resided with a Madame de Warrens, with whom he "lived in the greatest possible familiarity." This lady often suggested, that there would be no justice in the Supreme Being, should he be strictly just to us; because, not having bestowed what was necessary to make us essentially good, it would be requiring more than he had given. She was, nevertheless, a very good Catholic, or pretended at least to be one, and certainly desired to be such. If there had been no Christian morality established, Rosseau supposes she would have lived as though regulated by its principles. All her morality, however, was subordinate to the principles of M. Tavel; (who first seduced her from conjugal fidelity by urging, in effect, that *exposure* was the only crime,) or rather, she saw nothing in religion that contradicted them. Rosseau was far enough from being of this opinion; yet he confessed he dared not combat the arguments of the lady: nor is it supposable he could, as he appears to have been acting on the same principles at the time. "Finding in *her*," he adds, "all those ideas *I had occasion for* to secure me from the fears of death, and its future consequences, I drew confidence and security from this source." ‡

* Confessions, London Ed. 1796, Vol. I. pp. 52, 55, 68.

† Vol. I. pp. 125, 126. ‡ Vol. II. pp. 38, 103—106

The writings of Port Royal, and those of the Oratory, made him half a Jansenist; and notwithstanding all his confidence, their harsh theory sometimes alarmed him. A dread of hell, which, till then, he had never much apprehended, by little and little disturbed his security, and had not Madame de Warrens tranquilized his soul, would at length have been too much for him. His confessor also, a Jesuit, contributed all in his power to keep up his hopes.*

After this, he became familiar with another female, Theresa. He began by declaring to her that he would never either abandon or marry her. Finding her pregnant with her first child, and hearing it observed in an eating house, that *he who had best filled the Foundling Hospital, was always the most applauded*, "I said to myself," he tells us, "since it is the custom of the country, they who live here may adopt it. I cheerfully determined upon it without the least scruple: and the only one I had to overcome was that of Theresa; whom, with the greatest imaginable difficulty, I persuaded to comply." The year following a similar inconvenience was remedied by the same expedient: no more reflection on his part, nor approbation on that of the mother. "She obliged with trembling. My fault," says he, "was great; but it was an error."†

He resolved on settling at Geneva: and, on going thither and being mortified at his exclusion from the rights of a citizen by the profession of a religion different from his forefathers, he determined openly to return to the latter. "I thought," says he, "the gospel being the same for every Christian; and the only difference in religions the result of the explanations given by men to that which they did not understand, it was the exclusive right of the sovereign power in every country to fix the mode of worship, and these unintelligible opinions; and that, consequently, it was the duty of a citizen to admit the one, and conform to the other, in the manner prescribed by the law." Accordingly, at Geneva he renounced Popery.‡

* Vol II. p. 127. † *Part* II. Vol. I. pp. 123. 154, 155. 183. 187. 315.

‡ *Part* II. Vol. I. pp. 263. 264.

After passing twenty years with Theresa, he made her his wife. He appears to have intrigued with a Madame de H——. Of his desires after that lady he says, "Guilty without remorse, I soon became so without measure."*

Such, according to his own account, was the life of uprightness and honour which was to expiate for a theft which he had committed when a young man, and laid to a female servant, by which she lost her place and character.† Such was Rosseau, the man whom the rulers of the French nation have delighted to honour; and who, for writing this account, had vanity and presumption to expect the applause of his Creator. "Whenever the last trumpet shall sound," says he, "I will present myself before the sovereign Judge, with this book in my hand, and loudly proclaim, Thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I. Power eternal! Assemble round thy throne the innumerable throng of my fellow-mortals. Let them listen to my confessions, let them blush at my depravity, let them tremble at my sufferings, let each in his turn expose, with equal sincerity, the failings, the wanderings of his heart; and, if he dare, aver, I was better than that man."‡

* Vol. I. pp. 311. 378. † Vol. I. pp. 155. 160. ‡ Vol. I. p. 1.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIANITY HAS NOT ONLY PRODUCED GOOD EFFECTS IN THOSE WHO CORDIALLY BELIEVE IT, BUT HAS GIVEN TO THE MORALS OF SOCIETY AT LARGE A TONE, WHICH DEISM SO FAR AS IT OPERATES, GOES TO COUNTERACT.

No man walks through life without a rule of some kind, by which his conduct is directed, and his inclinations restrained. They who fear not God are influenced by a regard to the opinions of men. To avoid the censure, and gain the applause of the public, is the summit of their ambition.

Public opinion has an influence, not only on the conduct of individuals in a community, but on the formation of its laws. Legislators will not only conform their systems to what the humours of the people will bear, but will themselves incline to omit those virtues which are the most ungrateful, and to spare those vices which are the most agreeable.

Nor is this all: so great is the influence of public opinion that it will direct the conduct of a community against its own laws. There are obsolete statutes, as we all know, the breach of which cannot be punished: and even statutes which are not obsolete, where they operate against this principle, have but little effect; witness the connivance at the atrocious practice of duelling.

Now, if public opinion be so potent a principle, whatever has a prevailing influence in forming it, must give a decided tone to what are considered as the morals of a nation. I say, *to what are considered* as the morals of a nation: for, strictly speaking, so much of the love of God and man, as prevails in a nation, so much morality is there in it, and no more. But, as we can judge of love only by

its expressions, we call those actions moral, though it is possible their morality may be only counterfeit, by which the love of God and man is ordinarily expressed. If we perform those actions which are the ordinary expressions of love, from some other motive, our good deeds are thereby rendered evil in the sight of Him who views things as they are: nevertheless what we do may be equally beneficial to society as though we acted from the purest motive. In this indirect way Christianity has operated more than any thing that has been called by the name of religion, or by any other name, towards meliorating the state of mankind.

It has been observed, and with great propriety, that, in order to know what religion has done for an individual, we must consider what he would have been without it. The same may be said of a nation, or of the world. What would the nations of Europe have been at this time, if it had not been for the introduction of Christianity? It cannot reasonably be pretended that they would have been in any better situation, as to morality, than that in which they were previously to this event: for there is no instance of any people having by their own efforts, emerged from idolatry, and the immoralities which attend it. Now, as to what that state was, some notice has been taken already, so far as relates to the principles and lives of the old philosophers. To this I shall add a brief review of the state of society among them.

Great praises are bestowed by Plutarch on the customs and manners of the *Lacedemonians*. Yet the same writer acknowledges, that *theft* was encouraged in their children by a law; and that in order to "sharpen their wits, to render them crafty and subtle, and to train them up in all sorts of wiles and cunning, watchfulness and circumspection, whereby they were more apt to serve them in their wars, which was upon the matter the whole profession of this Commonwealth. And if at any time they were taken in the act of stealing, they were most certainly punished with rods, and, the penance of fasting; not because they esteemed the stealth criminal, but because they wanted skill and cunning in the management and conduct of it."* Hence, as might be expected, and as Herodotus observes, their actions were gen-

* Plutarch's Morals, Vol. I. p. 96.

erally contrary to their words; and there was no dependance upon them in any matter.

As to their *chastity*, there were common baths in which the men and women bathed together; and it was ordered that the young maidens should appear naked in the public exercises, as well as the young men, and that they should dance naked with them at the solemn festivals and sacrifices. Husbands also were allowed to impart the use of their wives to handsome and deserving men, in order to the producing of healthy and vigorous children for the Commonwealth.

Children which were deformed, or of a bad constitution, were *murdered*. This inhuman custom was common all over Greece; so much so, that it was reckoned a singular thing among the Thebans, that the law forbad any Theban to expose his infant, under pain of death. This practice, with that of procuring abortion were encouraged by Plato and Aristotle.

The unnatural *love of boys* was so common in Greece, than in many places it was sanctioned by the public laws, of which Aristottle gives the reason: namely, to prevent their having too many children. Maximus Tyrius celebrates it as a most singular heroic act of Agesilaus, that, being in love with a beautiful barbarian boy, he suffered it to go no farther than looking t him and admiring him. Epictetus also praises Socrates in this manner: "Go to Socrates, and see him lying by Alcibiades, yet slighting his youth and beauty. Consider what a victory he was conscious of obtaining! What an Olympic prize! So that, by heaven, one might justly salute him, Hail, incredibly great, universal victor!" What an implication does such language contain of the manners of those times!

The Romans were allowed by Romulus to destroy all their female children, except the eldest: and even with regard to their male children, if they were deformed, or monstrous, he permitted the parents to expose them, after having shown them to five of their nearest neighbours. Such was their *cruelty* to their slaves, that it was not unusual for their masters to put such of them as were old, sick, and infirm, into an island in the Tiber, where they left them to perish. So far did some of them carry their

luxury and wantonness as to drown them in the fish-ponds, that they might be devoured by the fish, to make the flesh more delicate!

Gladiatory shows were common among them; in which a number of slaves were engaged to fight for the diversion of the multitude, till each one slew or was slain by his antagonist. Of these brutish exercises the people were extremely fond; even the women ran eagerly after them, taking pleasure in seeing the combatants kill one another, desirous only that they should fall genteelly, or in an agreeable attitude! They were exhibited at the funerals of great and rich men, and on many other occasions. So frequent did they become, that no war, it is said, caused such slaughter of mankind as did these sports of pleasure, throughout the several provinces of the Roman empire.

That odious and *unnatural* vice, which prevailed among the Greeks, was also common among the Romans. Cicero introduces, without any mark of disapprobation, Cotta, a man of the first rank and genius, freely and familiarly owning to other Romans of the same quality, that worse than beastly vice as practised by himself, and quoting the authorities of ancient philosophers in vindication of it. It appears also from Seneca, that in his time it was practised at Rome, openly and without shame. He speaks of flocks and troops of boys, distinguished by their colours and nations, and that great care was taken to train them up for that detestable employment.

The religious rites performed in honor of Venus, in Cyprus, and at Aphac, on Mount Libanus, consisted in lewdness of the grossest kinds. The young people, of both sexes, crowded from all parts to those sinks of pollution; and, filling the groves and temples with their shameless practises, committed whoredom by thousands, out of pure devotion.

All the Babylonian women were obliged to prostitute themselves once in their lives, at the temple of Venus or Mylitta, to the first man that asked them: and the money earned by this means was always esteemed sacred.

Human sacrifices were offered up in almost all heathen countries. Children were burnt alive by their parents, to Baal, Moloch, and other deities. The Carthaginians, in times of public

calamity, not only burnt alive the children of the best families to Saturn, and that by hundreds, but sometimes sacrificed themselves in the same manner, in great numbers. Here in Britain, and in Gaul, it was a common practice to surround a man with a kind of wicker-work, and burn him to death, in honor of their Gods.*

In addition to the above, Mr. Hume has written as follows: "What cruel tyrants were the Romans over the world, during the time of their Commonwealth! It is true, they had laws to prevent oppression in their provincial magistrates; but Cicero informs us that the Romans could not better consult the interest of the provinces than by repealing these very laws. For in that case, says he, our magistrates having entire impunity, would plunder no more than would satisfy their own rapaciousness: whereas, at present, they must also satisfy that of their judges, and of all the great men of Rome, of whose protection they stand in need."

The same writer, who certainly was not prejudiced against them, speaking of their Commonwealth in its more early times, farther observes, "The most illustrious period of the Roman history, considered in a political view, is that between the beginning of the first and the end of the last Punic war; yet at this very time, the horrid practice of *poisoning* was so common, that during part of a season, a prætor punished capitally, for this crime, above *three thousand* persons in a part of Italy; and found informations of this nature still multiplying upon him! So depraved in private life," adds Mr. Hume, "were that people, whom, in their history, we so much admire."†

From the foregoing facts, we may form some judgment of the justness of Mr. Paine's remarks. "We know nothing," says he, "of what the ancient Gentile world was before the time of the Jews, whose practice has been to calumniate and blacken the char-

* The authorities on which this brief statement of facts is founded, may be seen in Dr. Leland's Advantages and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, Vol. II. *Part* II. Chap. III. IV. where the subject is more particularly handled. See also, Deism Revealed, Vol. I. pp. 77, 78.

†Essay on Politics a Science.

acter of all other nations. As far as we know to the contrary, they were a just and moral people, and not addicted, like the Jews, to cruelty and revenge, but of whose profession of faith we are unacquainted. It appears to have been their custom to personify both virtue and vice by statues and images, as is done now-a-days by statuary and painting: but it does not follow from this that they worshipped them any more than we do."*

Unless heathens, before the time of the Jews, were totally different from what they were in all after ages, there can be no reasonable doubt of their worshipping a plurality of deities, of which images were supposed to be the representations. Mr. Paine himself allows, and that in the same performance, that prior to the Christian era they were "Idolaters, and had twenty or thirty thousand gods."† Yet, by his manner of speaking in this place, he manifestly wishes to insinuate, in behalf of *all* the heathen nations, that they might worship idols no more than we do. It might be worth while for this writer, methinks, to bestow a little more attention to the improvement of his memory.

With respect to their being "just and moral people," unless they were extremely different before the time of the Jews from what they were in all after ages, there can be no reasonable doubt of their being what the sacred writers have represented them. If those writers have said nothing worse of them than has been said by the most early and authentic historians from among themselves, it will be easy for an impartial reader to decide whether heathens have been "calumniated and blackened" by the Jewish writers, or the Jewish writers by Mr. Paine.

But it is not by the state of the *ancient* heathens only that we discover the importance of Christianity. A large part of the world is still in the same condition; and the same immoralities abound among them, which are reported to have abounded among the Greeks and Romans.

I am aware that deistical writers have laboured to hold up the modern, as well as the ancient heathens, in a very favourable light. In various anonymous publications, much is said of their

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. pp. 39, 40. † Ibid. p. 5.

simplicity and virtue. One of them suggests, that the Chinese are so "superior to Christians in relation to moral virtues, that it may seem necessary that they should send missionaries to teach us the use and practice of Natural Theology, as we send missionaries to them to teach them Revealed Religion."* Yea, and some who wish to rank as Christians, have, on this ground, objected to all missionary undertakings among the heathen. Let us examine this matter a little closely.

Almost all the accounts which are favourable to heathen virtue, are either written by the adversaries of Christianity, and with a design to disparage it; or by navigators, and travellers, who have touched at particular places, and made their reports according to the treatment they have met with, rather than from a regard to universal righteousness. An authentic report of the morals of a people, requires to be given, not from a transient visit, but from a continued residence among them; not from their occasional treatment of a stranger, but from their general character; and not from having an end to answer, but with a rigid regard to truth.

It is worthy of notice, that the far greater part of these representations respect people with whom we have little or no acquaintance; and therefore, whatever the truth may be, are less liable to contradiction. As to China, Hindostan, and some other parts of the world, with whose moral state we have had the means of acquiring some considerable degree of knowledge, the praises bestowed on them by our adversaries have proved to be unfounded. From the accounts of those who have resided in *China*, there does not seeem to be much reason to boast of their virtue. On the contrary, their morals appear to be full as bad as those of the ancient heathens. It is allowed, they take great care of their outward behaviour, more perhaps than is taken in any other part of the world besides; that whatever they do or say is so contrived that it may have a good appearance, please all, and offend none; and that they excel in outward modesty, gravity, good words, courtesy, and civility. But, notwithstanding this, it is said that the sin against nature is extremely common—that drunkenness is

* Christianity as old as the Creation, pp. 366, 367

considered as no crime—that every one takes as many concubines as he can keep—that many of the common people pawn their wives in time of need; and some lend them for a month, or more, or less, according as they agree—that marriage is dissolved on the most trifling occasions—that sons and daughters are sold whenever their parents please, and that is frequently—that many of the rich, as well as the poor, when they are delivered of daughters, stifle and kill them—that those who are more tender-hearted will leave them under a vessel, where they expire in great misery—and finally, that notwithstanding this, they all, except the learned, plead humanity and compassion against killing other living creatures, thinking it a cruel thing to take that life which they cannot give. Montesquieu says, "The Chinese, whose whole life is governed by the established rites, are the most void of common honesty of any people upon earth; and the laws, though they do not allow them to rob or to spoil by violence, yet permit them to cheat and defraud." With this agrees the account given of them in Lord Anson's *Voyages*, and by other navigators—that lying, creating, stealing, and all the little arts of chicanery abound among them; and that, if you detect them in a fraud, they calmly plead *the custom of the country.** Such are the people by whom we are to be taught the use and practice of natural theology!

If credit could be given to what some writers have advanced, we might suppose the moral philosophy and virtuous conduct of the *Hindoos* to be worthy of being a pattern to the world. The rules by which they govern their conduct are, as we have been told, "Not to tell false tales, nor to utter any thing that is untrue; not to steal any thing from others, be it ever so little; not to defraud any by their cunning, in bargains, or contracts; not to oppress any when they have power to do it."†

Very opposite accounts, however, are given by numerous and respectable witnesses, and who do not appear to have written under the influence of prejudice. I shall select but two or three.

* See Leland's Advantages and Necessity of Revelation, Vol. II *Part* II. Chap. IV.

† Harris's Voyages and Travels, Vol. I. Chap. II. § 11, 12.

Francis Bernier, an intelligent French traveller, speaking of the Hindoos, says, "I know not whether there be in the world a more covetous and sordid nation.—The Brahmins keep these people in their errors and superstitions, and *scruple not to commit tricks and villainies so infamous*, that I could never have believed them, if I had not made an ample inquiry into them."*

Governor Holwell thus characterizes them: "A race of people, who, from their infancy, are utter strangers to the idea of common faith and honesty."—"This is the situation of the bulk of the people of Indostan, as well as of the modern Brahmins: amongst the latter, if we except one in a thousand, we give them over measure. The Gentoos in general are as degenerate, superstitious, litigious, and wicked a people, as any race of people in the known world, if not eminently more so; especially the common run of Brahmins; and we can truly aver, that, during almost five years that we presided in the Judicial Cutchery Court of Calcutta, never any murder, or other atrocious crime, came before us, but it was proved in the end a Brahmin was at the bottom of it." †

Mr. afterwards Sir John Shore, and Governor General of Bengal, speaking of the same people, says, "A man must be long acquainted with them before he can believe them capable of that barefaced falsehood, servile adulation, and deliberate deception, which they daily practice.—It is the business of all, from the Ryott to the Dewan, to conceal and deceive; the simplest matters of fact are designedly covered with a veil, through which no human understanding can penetrate." ‡

In perfect agreement with these accounts are others which are constantly received from persons of observation and probity, now residing in India. Of these the following are extracts: "Lying, theft, whoredom, and deceit, are sins for which the Hindoos are notorious. There is not one man in a thousand, who does not

* Voyages de Francois Bernier, Tome I. pp. 150. 162. et Tome II. p. 105.

† Holwell's Historical events, Vol. I. p. 228. Vol. II. p. 151

‡ Parliamentary Proceedings against Mr. Hastings, Appendix to Vol. II. p. 65.

make lying his constant practice. Their thoughts of God are so very light, that they only consider him as a sort of plaything. Avarice and servility are so united in almost every individual, that cheating, juggling, and lying, are esteemed no sins with them; and the best among them, though they speak ever so great a falsehood, yet it is not considered as an evil, unless you first charge them to speak the truth. When they defraud you ever so much, and you charge them with it, they coolly answer, *It is the custom of the country*—In England, the poor receive the benefit of the gospel, in being fed and clothed by those who know not by what principles they are moved. For when the gospel is generally acknowledged in a land, it puts some to fear, and others to shame; so that to relieve their own smart they provide for the poor: but here, O miserable state! I have found the pathway stopped up by sick and wounded people, perishing with hunger; and that in a populous neighbourhood, where numbers pass by, some singing, others talking, but none showing mercy; as though they were dying weeds, and not dying men."*

Comparing these accounts, a reader might be apt to suppose that the people must have greatly *degenerated* since their laws were framed; but the truth is, the laws are nearly as corrupt as the people. Those who examine the *Hindoo Code*,† will find them so; and will perceive that there is scarcely a species of wickedness which they do not tolerate, especially in favour of the Brahmuns, of which order of men, it may be presumed, were the first framers of the constitution.

Let the reader judge, from this example of the Hindoos, what degree of credit is due to antichristian historians, when they undertake to describe the virtues of heathens.

From this brief statement of facts, it is not very difficult to perceive somewhat of that which Christianity has accomplished with regard to the general state of society. It is by no means denied

* Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Mission, No. II. p. 129. No. III. pp. 191. 230. No. IV. p. 291.

† Translated from the Shanscrit, and published in 1773.

that the natural dispositions of heathens, as well as other men, are various. The scriptures themselves record instances of their amiable deportment towards their fellow-creatures.* Neither is it denied that there are characters in christianized nations, and that in great numbers, whose wickedness cannot be exceeded, nor equalled, by any who are destitute of their advantages. There is no doubt but that the general moral character of heathens is far less atrocious than that of Deists who reject the light of revelation, and of multitudes of nominal Christians who abuse it. The state of both these descriptions of men, with respect to unenlightened pagans, is as that of Chorazin and Bethsaida with respect to Sodom and Gomorrha. But that for which I contend is, the effect of Christianity upon *the general state of society*. It is an indisputable fact, that it has banished gross idolatry from every nation in Europe. It is granted, that where whole nations were concerned, this effect might be at first accomplished, not by persuasion, but by force of arms. In this manner many legislators thought they did God service. But, whatever were the means by which the worship of the one living and true God were at first introduced, it is a fact that the principle is now so fully established in the minds and consciences of men, that there needs no force to prevent the return of the old system of polytheism. There needs no greater proof of this than has been afforded by unbelievers of a neighboring nation. Such evidently has been their predilection for pagan manners, that, if the light that is gone abroad among mankind permitted it, they would at once have plunged into gross idolatry, as into their native element. But this is rendered morally impossible. They must be Theists or Atheists; Polytheists, they cannot be.

By accounts, which from time to time have been received, it appears that the prevailing party in France have not only labored to eradicate every principle of Christianity, but, in one instance, actually made the experiment for restoring something like the old idolatry. A respectable magistrate of the United States,† in his Address to the Grand Jury in Luzerne County, has stated a few

* Gen. xxiii. †Judge Rush.

of these facts to the public. "Infidelity," says he, "having got possession of the power of the State, every nerve was exerted to efface from the mind all ideas of religion and morality. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, or a future state of rewards and punishments, so essential to the preservation of order in society, and to the prevention of crimes, was publicly ridiculed, and the people taught to believe that death was an everlasting sleep."

"They ordered the words 'Temple of Reason' to be inscribed on the churches, in contempt of the doctrine of revelation. Atheistical and licentious Homilies have been published in the churches, instead of the old service; and a ludicrous imitation of the Greek mythology exhibited, under the title of the 'Religion of Reason.' Nay, they have gone so far as to dress up a common strumpet with the most fantastic decorations, whom they blasphemously styled, 'The Goddess of Reason,' and who was carried to church on the shoulders of some Jacobins selected for the purpose, escorted by the National Guards and the constituted *authorities*. When they got to the church, the strumpet was placed on the altar erected for the purpose, and harangued the people, who, in return, professed the deepest adoration to her, and sung the *Carmagnole*, and other songs, by way of worshipping her. This horrid scene—almost too horrid to relate—was concluded by burning the prayer-book, confessional, and every thing appropriated to the use of public worship; numbers, in the mean time, danced round the flames, with every appearance of frantic and infernal mirth."

These things sufficiently express the inclinations of the parties concerned, and what kind of blessings the world is to expect from atheistical philosophy. But all attempts of this kind are vain: the minds of men throughout Europe, if I may for once use a cant term of their own, are too *enlightened* to stoop to the practice of such fooleries. We have a gentlemen in our own country, who appears to be a sincere devotee to the pagan worship, and who, it seems, would wish to introduce it; but, as far as I can learn, all the success which he has met with, is to have obtained from the public the honorable appellation of *the Gentile Priest*.

Whatever we are, and whatever we may be, gross idolatry, I presume, may be considered as banished from Europe; and,

thanks be to God, a number of its attendant abominations, with various other immoral customs of the heathen, are, in a good measure, banished with it. We have no human sacrifices; no gladiatory combats; no public indecencies between the sexes; no law that requires prostitution; no plurality or community of wives; no dissolving of marriages on trifling occasions; nor any legal murdering of children, or of the aged and infirm. If unnatural crimes be committed among us, they are not common; much less are they tolerated by the laws, or countenanced by public opinion. On the contrary, the odium which follows such practices is sufficient to stamp with perpetual infamy the first character in the land. Rapes, incests and adulteries, are not only punishable by law, but odious in the estimation of the public. It is with us, at least in a considerable degree, as it was in Judea, where he that was guilty of such vices, was considered as *a fool in Israel*. The same, in less degrees, may be said of fornication, drunkenness, lying, theft, fraud, and cruelty; no one can live in the known practice of these vices, and retain his character. It cannot be pleaded in excuse with us, as it is in China, Hindostan, and Otaheite, that SUCH THINGS ARE THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY.

We freely acknowledge, that if we turn our eyes upon the great evils which still exist, even in those nations where Christianity has had the greatest influence, we find abundant reason for lamentation: but, while we lament the evil, there is no reason that we should overlook the good. Comparing our state with that of former times, we cannot but with thankfulness acknowledge, *What hath God wrought!*

I can conceive of but one question that can have any tendency to weaken the argument arising from the foregoing facts: viz. *Are they the effects of Christianity?* If they be not, and can be fairly accounted for on other principles, the argument falls to the ground: but if they be, though Shaftesbury satirize, Hume doubt, Voltaire laugh, Gibbon insinuate, and Paine pour forth scurrility like a torrent, yet honest men will say, *An evil tree bringeth not forth good fruit: If this religion were not of God, it could do nothing.*

If there be an adequate cause, distinct from Christianity, to which these effects may be ascribed, it becomes our adversaries

to state it. Meanwhile, I may observe, they are not ascribable to any thing besides Christianity that has borne the name of *religion*. As to that of the ancient heathens, it had no manner of relation to morality. The priests, as Dr. Leland has proved "made it not their business to teach men virtue."* It is the same with modern heathens: their religion has nothing of morality pertaining to it. They perform a round of superstitious observances, which produce no good effect whatever upon their lives. What they were yesterday, they are to-day; no man repenteth himself of his wickedness, saying, What have I done! Nor is it materially different with Mahometans. Their religion, though it includes the acknowledgment of one living and true God, yet, rejecting the Messiah as the Son of God, and attaching them to a bloody and lascivious impostor, produces no good effect upon their morals, but leaves them under the dominion of barbarity and voluptuousness. In short, there is no religion but that of Jesus Christ that so much as professes to *bless men by turning them from their iniquities.*

Neither can these effects be attributed to *philosophy.* A few great minds despised the idolatries of their countrymen; but they did not reform them: and no wonder; for they practised what they themselves despised. Nor did all their harangues in favor of virtue produce any substantial effect, either on themselves or others. The heathen nations were never more enlightened as to philosophy, than at the time of our Saviour's appearance; yet as to morality, they never were more depraved.

It is Christianity then,. and nothing else, which has destroyed the odious idolatry of many nations, and greatly contracted its attendant immoralities. It was in this way that the gospel operated in the primitive ages, wherever it was received; and it is in the same way that it continues to operate to the present time. Real Christians must needs be averse to these things; and they are the only men living who cordially set themselves against them.

This truth will receive additional evidence from an observation of the different degrees of morality produced in different places, according to the degree of purity with which the Christian religion

* Advantage and Necessity of Revelation, Vol. II. p. 38.

has been taught, and liberty given it to operate. In several nations of Europe, popery has long been established, and supported by sanguinary laws. By these means the Bible has been kept from the common people, Christian doctrine and worship corrupted, and the consciences of men subdued to a usurper of Christ's authority. Christianity is there in prison; and anti-christianism exalted in its place. In other nations this yoke is broken. Every true Christian has a Bible in his family, and measures his religion by it. The rights of conscience also being respected, men are allowed, in religious matters, to judge and act for themselves; and Christian churches are formed according to the primitive model. Christianity is here at liberty: here, therefore, it may be expected to produce its greatest effects. Whether this does not correspond with fact, let those who are accustomed to observe men and things with an impartial eye determine.

In Italy, France, and various other countries, where the Christian religion has been so far corrupted as to lose nearly all its influence, illicit connexions may be formed, adulterous intrigues pursued, and even crimes against nature committed, with but little dishonor. Rousseau could here send his illegitimate offspring to the Foundling Hospital, and lay his accounts with being applauded for it, as being *the custom of the country*. It is not so in Britain, and various other nations, where the gospel has had a freer course; for though the same dispositions are discovered in great numbers of persons, yet the fear of the public frown holds them in awe. If we except a few abandoned characters, who have nearly lost all sense of shame, and who, by means either of their titles or fortunes on the one hand, or their well-known baseness on the other, have almost bid defiance to the opinion of mankind, this observation will hold good, I believe, as to the bulk of the inhabitants of protestant countries.

And it is worthy of notice, that in those circles or connexions where Christianity has had the greatest influence, a sobriety of character is carried to a much higher degree than in any other. Where there is one divorce from among protestant dissenters, and other serious professors of Christianity, there are, I believe, a hundred from among those whose practice it is to neglect the

worship of God, and to frequent the amusements of the theatre. And in proportion to the singularity of such cases, such is the surprise, indignation, and disgrace, which accompany them. Similar observations might be made on public executions for robbery, forgery, tumults, assassinations, murders, &c. It is not among the circles professing a serious regard to Christianity, but among its adversaries, that these practices ordinarily prevail.

Some have been inclined to attribute various differences in these things to a difference in *national character*: but national character, as it respects morality, is formed very much from the state of society in different nations. A number of painful observations would arise from a view of the conduct and character of Englishmen on foreign shores. To say nothing of the rapacities committed in the East, whither is our boasted humanity fled when we land upon the coast of Guinea? The brutality with which millions of our fellow-creatures have been torn from their connexions, bound in irons, thrown into a floating dungeon, sold in the public markets, beaten, maimed, and many of them murdered, for trivial offences, and all this without any effectual restraint from the laws, must load our national character with everlasting infamy. These same persons, however, who can be guilty of these crimes at a distance, are as apparently humane as other people when they re-enter their native country. And wherefore? Because in their native country the state of society is such as will not admit of a contrary behavior. A man who should violate the principles of justice and humanity here, would not only be exposed to the censure of the laws, but, supposing he could evade this, his character would be lost. The state of society in Guinea imposes no such restraints; in that situation, therefore, wicked men will indulge in wickedness. Nor is it much otherwise in our West-India Islands. So little is there of Christianity in those quarters, that it has hitherto had scarcely any influence in the framing of their laws, or the forming of the public opinion. There are, doubtless, just and humane individuals in those islands; but the far greater part of them, it is to be feared, are devotees to avarice; to which, as to a Moloch, one or other of them are continually offering up human victims.

Vicious practices are commonly more prevalent in large and populous cities than in other places. Hither the worst characters commonly resort, as noxious animals to a covert from their pursuers. In places but thinly inhabited, the conduct of individuals is conspicuous to the community: but here they can assemble with others of their own description, and strengthen each other's hands in evil, without much fear of being detected. Christianity, therefore, may be supposed to have less effect in the way of restraining immoral characters in the city, than in the country. Yet even here it is sensibly felt. The metropolis of our own nation, though it abounds with almost every species of vice, yet what reflecting citizen will deny that it would be much worse but for the influence of the gospel? As it is, there are numbers, of different religious denominations, who constantly attend to public and family worship; who are as honorable in their dealings as they are amiable in domestic life; and as liberal in their benefactions as they are assiduous to find out deserving cases. The influence which this body of men have upon the citizens at large, in restraining vice, promoting schemes of benevolence, and preserving peace and good order in society, is beyond calculation. But for their examples and unremitted exertions, London would be a Sodom in its guilt, and might be expected to resemble it in its punishment.

In country towns and villages it is easy to perceive the influence which a number of serious Christians will have upon the manners of the people at large. A few families in which the Bible is daily read, the worship of God performed, and a Christian conversation exemplified, will have a powerful effect. Whether characters of an opposite description regard their conduct, or not, their consciences favor it. Hence it is that one upright man, in a question of right and wrong, will often put to silence a company of the advocates of unrighteousness; and that three or four Christian families have been known to give a turn to the manners of a whole neighborhood.

In fine, let it be closely considered, whether a great part of that sobriety which is to be found *among Deists themselves* (as there are, doubtless, sober characters among Deists, and even among Atheists)

be not owing to Chrisitanity. It has often been remarked, and justly too, that much of the knowledge which our adversaries possess, is derived from this source. To say nothing of the best ideas of the old philosophers on moral subjects being derived from revelation, of which there is considerable evidence, it is manifest that so far as the moderns exceed them, it is principally, if not entirely owing to this medium of instruction. The Scriptures having diffused the light, they have insensibly imbibed it; and finding it to accord with reason, they flatter themselves that *their* reason has discovered it. "After grazing," as one expresses it, "in the pastures of revelation, they boast of having grown fat by nature." And it is the same with regard to their sobriety. So long as they reside among people whose ideas of right and wrong are formed by the morality of the gospel, they must, unless they wish to be stigmatized as profligates, behave with some degree of decorum. Where the conduct is uniform and consistent, charity, I allow, and even justice, will lead us to put the best construction upon the motive: but when we see men uneasy under rersraints, and continually writing in favour of vices which they dare not openly practice, we are justified in imputing their sobriety, not to principle, but to the circumstances attending their situation. If some of those gentlemen who have deserted the Christian ministry, and commenced professed Infidels, had acted years ago as licentiously as they have done of late, they must have quitted their situation sooner, and were they now to leave their country and connexions, and enter into such a state of society, as would comport with their present wishes, their conduct would be more licentious than it is.

On these principles that great and excellent man, WASHINGTON, in his farewel address to the people of the United States, acknowledges the necessity of religion to the well-being of a nation. "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity," he says, "religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A vol-

ume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in the courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion.—Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of a peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Upon the whole, the evidence of this chapter, proves that Christianity is not only living principle of virtue in good men, but affords this farther blessing to society, that it restrains the vices of the bad. It is a tree of life whose fruit is immortality, and whose very leaves are for the healing of the nations.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTIANITY IS A SOURCE OF HAPPINESS TO INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY: BUT DEISM LEAVES THE ONE AND THE OTHER WITHOUT HOPE.

Though the happiness of creatures be not admitted to be the final end of God's moral government, yet it is freely allowed to occupy an important place in the system. God is good; and his goodness appears in having so blended the honour of his name with the felicity of his creatures, that in seeking the one they should find the other. In so important a light do we consider human happiness, as to be willing to allow that to be the true religion which is most adapted to promote it.

To form an accurate judgment on this subject, it is necessary to ascertain wherein happiness consists. We ought neither to expect nor desire, in the present life, such a state of mind as wholly excludes painful sensations. Had we less of the exercises of godly sorrow, our sacred pleasures would be fewer than they are; or were we unacquainted with the afflictions common to men, we should be less able to sympathize with them; which would be injurious, not only to society, but to ourselves, as it would deprive us of one of the richest sources of enjoyment.

Mr. Hume, in one of his Essays, very properly called *The Sceptic*, seems to think that happiness lies in having one's inclinations gratified; and, as different men have different inclinations and even the same men at different times, *that* may be happiness in one case which is misery n another. This sceptical writer, however, would hardly deny, that in happiness, as in other things, there is a false and a true, an imaginary and a real; or that a studied indulgence of the apetites and passions, though it should promote the one

would destroy the other. The light of nature, as acknowledged even by deists, teaches that self-denial, in many cases, is necessary to self preservation; and that to act a contrary part, would be to ruin our peace and destroy our health.* I presume it will be granted, that no definition of happiness can be complete, which includes not peace of mind, which admits not of perpetuity, or which answers not the necessities and miseries of human life.

But if nothing deserves the name of happiness which does not include *peace of mind*, all criminal pleasure is at once excluded. Could a life of unchastity, intrigue, dishonour, and disappointed pride, like that of Rousseau, be a happy life? No; amidst the brilliancy of his talents, remorse, shame, conscious meanness, and the dread of an hearafter, must corrode his heart, and render him a stranger to peace. Contrast with the life of this man, that of Howard, pious, temperate, just, and benevolent, he lived for the good of mankind. His happiness consisted in *serving his generation by the will of God.* If all men were like Rousseau, the world would be abundantly more miserable than it is: if all were like Howard, it would be abundantly more happy. Rousseau, governed by the love of fame, is fretful and peevish, and never satisfied with the treatment he receives: Howard, governed by the love of mercy, shrinks from applause, with this modest and just reflection, "Alas, our best performances have such a mixture of sin and folly, that praise is vanity and presumption and pain, to a thinking mind." Rousseau, after a life of debauchery and shame, confesses it to the world, and makes a merit of his confession, and even presumptuously supposes, that it will avail him before the Judge of all: Howard, after a life of singular devotedness to God, and benevolence to men, accounted himself an unprofitable servant, leaving this for his motto, his last testimony, CHRIST IS MY HOPE. Can there be any doubt which of the two was the happiest man?

Further: If nothing amounts to real happiness which admits not of *perpetuity*, all natural pleasure, when weighed against the hopes and joys of the gospel, will be found wanting. It is an

* Volney's Law of Nature, p. 12.

expressive characteristic of the good things of this life, that *they all perish with the using*. The charms of youth and beauty quickly fade. The power of relishing natural enjoyments is soon gone. The pleasures of active life, of building, planting, forming schemes, and achieving enterprises, soon follow. In old age none of them will flourish; and in death they are exterminated. *The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator*, all descend, in one undistinguished mass, into oblivion. And, as this is a truth which no man can dispute, those who have no prospects of a higher nature must often feel themselves unhappy. Contrast with this the joys of the gospel. These, instead of being diminished by time, are often increased. To them the soil of age is friendly. While nature has been fading, and perishing by slow degrees, how often have we seen faith, hope, love, patience, and resignation to God, in full bloom. Who but Christians can contemplate the loss of all present enjoyments with satisfaction? Who else can view death, judgment, and eternity, with desire? I appeal to the hearts of libertines and unbelievers, whether they have not many misgivings and revoltings within them; and whether, in the hour of solitary reflection, they have not sighed the wish of Balaam, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

The following extract from a letter of a late nobleman, of loose principles, well known in the gay world, and published as authentic by a respectable prelate, deceased, will show the dreadful vacancy and wretchedness of a mind left to itself in the decline of life, and unsupported by Christian principle.—"I have seen the silly round of business and pleasure, and have done with it all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which in truth is very low: whereas those who have not experienced always overrate them. They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare; but I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pullies and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machine: and

I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illumine the whole decoration, to the astonishment and admiration of the ignorant audience. When I reflect on what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I cannot persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry of bustle and pleasure of the world had any reality: but I look on all that is past as one of those romantic dreams which opium commonly occasions; and I do by no means wish to repeat the nauseous dose for the sake of the fugitive dream. Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with that meritorious constancy and resignation that most men boast? No Sir, I really cannot help it. I bear it because I must bear it, whether I will or no. I think of nothing but killing time the best way I can, now that time has become my enemy. It is my resolution to sleep in the carriage during the remainder of the journey."

"You see," reflects the worthy prelate, "in how poor, abject, and unpitied a condition, at a time when he most wanted help and comfort, the world left him, and he left the world. Compare these words with those of another person, who took his leave in a very different manner: *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing.*"

It is observable, that even Rousseau himself, though the language certainly did not become his lips, affected, in advanced life, to derive consolation from Christian principles. In a letter to Voltaire he says, "I cannot help remarking, Sir, a very singular contrast between you and me. Sated with glory, and undeceived with the inanity of worldly grandeur, you live at freedom, in the midst of plenty, certain of immortality; you peaceably philosophize on the nature of the soul; and if the body, or the heart are indisposed, you have Tronchin for your physician and friend. Yet with all this you find nothing but evil on the face of the earth. I, on the other hand, obscure, indigent, tormented with an incurable disorder, meditate with pleasure in my solitude, and find every thing to be good. Whence arise these apparent contradictions?

You have yourself explained them. You live in a state of enjoyment, I in a state of hope; and hope gives charms to every thing."*

Finally: If nothing deserves the name of happiness which *meets not the necessities, nor relieves the miseries of human life*, Christianity alone can claim it. Every one who looks into his own heart, and makes proper observations on the dispositions of others, will perceive that man is possessed of a desire after something which is not to be found under the sun—after A GOOD WHICH HAS NO LIMITS. We may imagine our ideas are moderate, and set boundaries beyond which we may flatter ourselves we should never wish to pass; but this is self-deception. He that sets his heart on an estate, if he gain it will wish for something more. It would be the same if it were a kingdom; or even if all the kingdoms of the world were united in one. Nor is this desire to be attributed merely to human depravity; for it is the same with regard to knowledge: the mind is never satisfied with its present acquisitions. It is depravity that directs us to seek satisfaction in something short of God; but it is owing to the nature of the soul that we are never able to find it. It is not possible that a being created immortal, and with a mind capable of continual enlargement, should obtain satisfaction in a limited good. Men may spend their time and strength, and even sacrifice their souls in striving to grasp it, but it will elude their pursuit. It is only from an uncreated source that the mind can drink its fill. Here it is that the gospel meets our necessities. Its language is, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.—In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.—He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* How this lan-

* Works, Vol. IX. p. 336

guage has been verified, all who have made the trial can testify. To them, as to the only competent witnesses, I appeal.

It is not merely the nature of the soul however, but its depravity, from whence our necessities arise. We are sinners. Every man who believes there is a God, and a future state, or even only admits the possibility of them, feels the want of mercy. The first inquiries of a mind awakened to reflection will be, how he may escape the wrath to come; how he shall get over his everlasting ruin. A heathen, previously to any Christian instruction, exclaimed, in the moment of alarm, *What must I do to be saved?** And several Mahometans, being lately warned by a Christian minister of their sinful state, came the next morning to him with this very serious question, *Keman par hoibo?*—"How shall we get over?"† To answer these inquiries is beyond the power of any principles but those of the gospel. Philosophy may conjecture, superstition may deceive, and even a false system of Christianity may be aiding and abetting; each may labor to lull the conscience to sleep, but none of them can yield it satisfaction. It is only by believing in Jesus Christ, the great sacrifice that taketh away the sin of the world, that the sinner obtains a relief which will bear reflection; a relief which, at the same time, gives peace to the mind and purity to the heart. For the truth of this also, I appeal to all who have made the trial.

Where, but in the gospel, will you find relief under the innumerable ills of the present state? This is the well-known refuge of Christians. Are they poor, afflicted, persecuted, or reproached? They are led to consider Him who endured the contradiction of sinners, who lived a life of poverty and ignominy, who endured persecution and reproach, and death itself, for them; and to realize a blessed immortality in prospect. By a view of such things their hearts are cheered, and their afflictions become tolerable. Looking to Jesus, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God, they run with patience the race that is set before

* Acts xvi. 30.

† Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society, No. IV. p. 326.

them.—But what is the comfort of unbelievers? Life being short, and having no ground to hope for any thing beyond it, if they be crossed here they become inconsolable. Hence, it is not uncommon for persons of this description, after the example of the philosophers and statesmen of Greece and Rome, when they find themselves depressed by adversity, and have no prospect of recovering their fortunes, to put a period to their lives! Unhappy men! Is this the felicity to which ye would introduce us? Is it in guilt, shame, remorse, and desperation that ye descry such charms? Admitting that our hope of immortality is visionary, where is the injury? If it be a dream, is it not a pleasant one? To say the least, it beguiles many a melancholy hour, and can do no mischief; but if it be a reality, what will become of you?

I may be told, that if many put a period to their lives through unbelief, there is an equal number who fall sacrifices to religious melancholy. But to render this objection of force, it should be proved that the religion of Jesus Christ is the *cause* of this melancholy. Reason may convince us of the being of a God, and conscience bear witness that we are exposed to his displeasure. Now, if in this state of mind the heart refuse to acquiesce in the gospel way of salvation, we shall of course either rest in some delusive hope or sink into despair. But here, it is not religion, but the want of it, that produces the evil; it is unbelief, and not faith that sinks the sinner into despondency. Christianity disowns such characters. It records some few examples, such as Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas: but they are all branded as apostates from God and true religion. On the contrary, the writings of unbelievers, both ancient and modern, are known to plead for suicide, as an expedient in extremity. Rosseau, Hume, and others, have written in defence of it. The principles of such men both produce and require it. It is the natural offspring of unbelief, and the last resort of disappointed pride.

Whether Christianity, or the want of it be best adapted to relieve the heart under its various pressures, let those testify who have been in the habit of visiting the afflicted poor. On this subject the writer of these sheets can speak from his own knowledge. In this situation characters of very opposite descriptions are

found. Some are serious and sincere Christians; others, even among those who have attended the preaching of the Gospel, appear neither to understand nor to feel it. The tale of woe is told perhaps by both: but the one is unaccompanied with that discontent, that wretchedness of mind, and that inclination to despair, which is manifest in the other. Often have I seen the cheerful smile of contentment under circumstances the most abject and afflictive. Amidst tears of sorrow, which a full heart has rendered it impossible to suppress, a mixture of hope and joy has glistened. *The cup which my Father has given me to drink, shall I not drink it?* Such have been their feelings, and such their expressions; and where this has been the case, death has generally been embraced as the messenger of peace. *Here*, I have said, participating of their sensations,—*here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.—This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith.—Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

From individual happiness, let us proceed to examine that of *society*. Let us inquire, whether there be any well-grounded hope of the future melioration of the state of mankind, besides that which is afforded by the gospel. Great expectations have been raised of an end being put to wars, and of universal goodwill pervading the earth, in consequence of philosophical illumination, and the prevalence of certain modes of civil government. But these speculations proceed upon false data. They suppose that the cause of these evils is to be looked for in the ignorance, rather than in the depravity of men: or if depravity be allowed to have any influence, it is confined to the precincts of a court. Without taking upon me to decide which is the best mode of civil government; or what mode is most adapted to promote the peace and happiness of mankind, it is sufficient in this case, to show that wars generally originate, as the apostle James says, in the lusts, or *corrupt passions* of mankind. If this be proved, it will follow, that, however some forms of government may be more friendly to peace and happines than others, yet no *radical* cure can be effected till the disposition of men are changed. Let power be

placed where it may, with one or with many, still it must be in the hands of men. If all governments were so framed as that every national act should be expressive of the real will of the people, still, if the preponderating part of them be governed by pride and self-love rather than equity, we are not much the nearer. Governors taken from the common mass of Society, must needs resemble it. If there be any difference at the time of their first elevation to office, owing, as may be supposed, to the preference which all men give to an upright character for the management of their concerns, yet this advantage will be balanced, if not overbalanced by the subsequent temptations to injustice which are afforded by situations of wealth and power.

What is the source of contentions in common life? Observe the discords in neighbourhoods and families; which, notwithstanding all the restraints of relationship, interest, honour, law, and reason, are a fire that never ceases to burn; and which were they no more controlled by the laws than independent nations are by each other, would in thousands of instances break forth into assassinations and murders. From whence spring these wars? Are they the results of ignorance? If so, they would chiefly be confined to the rude, or uninformed part of the community. But is it so? There may, it is true, be more pretences to peace and good will, and fewer bursts of open resentment in the higher, than in the lower order of people: but their dispositions are much the same. The laws of politeness can only polish the surface; and there are some parts of the human character which still appear very rough. Even politeness has its regulations for strife and murder, and establishes iniquity by a law. The evil disposition is a kind of subterraneous fire; and in some form it will have vent. Are they the result of *court influence*? No. The truth is, if civil government in some form did not influence the fears of the unjust and contentious part of the community, there would be no security to those who are peaceably inclined, and especially to those who are withal religious, and whose pious conduct, like that of Noah, condemns the world. Now the same disposition which, in persons whose power extends only to a cottage, will operate in a way of domestic discord; in others whose influence extends

to the affairs of nations will operate on a more enlarged scale, producing war and all the dire calamities which attend it. The sum of the whole is this: When the preponderating part of the world shall cease to be proud, ambitious, envious, covetious, lovers of their ownselves, false, malignant, and intriguing; when they shall love God and one another out of a pure heart; then, and not till then, may we expect wars to cease, and the state of mankind to be essentially meliorated. While these dispositions remain, they will be certain to show themselves. If the best laws or constitution in the world stand in their way, they will, on certain occasions, bear down all before them.

An anonymous writer in the *Monthly Magazine*,* (a work which, without avowing it, is pretty evidently devoted to the cause of infidelity,) has instituted an inquiry into "The probability of the future melioration of the state of mankind." A dismal prospect indeed it is which he holds up to his fellow-creatures; yet were I an Infidel, like him, I should acquiesce in many things which he advances. The anchor of his hopes is *an increase of knowledge,* and the effects of this are circumscribed within a very narrow boundary. With respect to what we call *civilization*, he reckons it to have undergone all the vicissitudes of which it is capable. *Scientific refinement* may contribute to the happiness of a few individuals; but, he fears, cannot be made a ground of much advantage to the mass of mankind. Great scope, indeed, remains for the operation of increased knowledge in improvement in *government:* but even here it can only cure those evils which arise from ignorance, and not those which proceed from intention; which, "while the propensity to prefer our own interests above that of the community is," as he acknowledges, "interwoven into our very nature," will always form the mass of existing ills. If, indeed, the majority of a community, he says, became so enlightened concerning their interests, and so wise, steady, and unanimous in the pursuit of them, as to overcome all that resistance which the possessors of undue advantages will always make to a change unfavourable to themselves, something might be hoped

* For February, 1799, p 9.

for. But this, while they are under their old masters, he reckons as next to impossible. As to *political revolutions*, he did form high expectations from them; but his hopes are at an end. "I have only the wish left," says he, "the confidence is gone." As to *improved systems of morality*, which he considers as the art of living happy, though it might seem promising, yet history, he very justly remarks, does not allow us to expect that men, in proportion as they advance in this species of knowledge, will become more just, more temperate, or more benevolent. Of the *extinction of wars*, he has no hope. The new order of things which seemed opening in Europe, and to bid fair for it, has rather increased the evil: and as to *Christianity*, it has been tried, it seems, and found to be insufficient for the purpose. *Commerce*, instead of binding the nations in a golden chain of mutual peace and friendship, seems only to have given additional motives for war.

The amount is, There is little or no hope of the state of mankind being meliorated on *public* principles. All the improvement he can discern in this way consists in there being a little more lenity in the government of some countries than formerly: as to this, it is balanced by the prodigious increase of standing armies, and other national burdens.

The only way in which *an increase in knowledge* is to operate to the melioration of the state of mankind is in *private life*. It is to soften and humanize men's manners, and emancipate their minds from the shackles of superstition and bigotry; names which writers of this class commonly bestow upon Christianity. This is the boundary beyond which, whatever be his wishes, the hopes of this writer will not suffer him to pass: and even this respects only Europe and her immediate connexions, and not the whole of them. The great mass of mankind are in an absolutely hopeless condition: for there are no means of carrying our improvements among them but by conquest, and conquest is a Pandora's box, at the mention of which he shudders.

Such are the prospects of unbelievers; such is the horrid despondency under which they sink when providence counteracts their favourite schemes; and such the spirit which they labour to infuse into the minds of men in order to make them happy! Chris-

tian reader, Have you no better hopes than these? Are you not acquainted with a principle, which, like the machine of Archimedes, will remove this mighty mass of evils? Be they as great and as numerous as they may, if all can be reduced to a single cause, and that cause removed, the work is done. All the evils of which this writer complains are reducible to that one principle, which, he says, (and it is well *he* says it,) "is interwoven into our very nature; namely, The propensity to prefer our own interests above that of the community." It is this propensity that operates in the great, and induces them to "oppose every thing that would be unfavourable to their power and advantage;" and the same thing operates among common people; great numbers of whom it is well known, would sell their country for a piece of bread. If this principle cannot be removed, I shall, with this writer, for ever despair of any essential changes for the better in the state of mankind, and will content myself with cultivating private and domestic happiness, and hoping for the blessedness of a future life; but if it can, I must leave him to despair alone.

My hopes are not founded on forms of government, nor even on an increase of knowledge, though each may have its value; but *on the spirit by which both the rulers and the people will be governed.* All forms of government have hitherto rested on the basis of *self-love.* The wisest and best statesmen have been obliged to take it for granted that the mass of every people will be governed by this principle; and, consequently, all their schemes have been directed to the balancing of things in such a manner as that people, in pursuing their own interest, should promote that of the public. If in any case they have presumed on the contrary, experience has soon taught them that all their schemes are visionary, and inapplicable to real life. But if the mass of the people, composed of all the different orders of society, were governed by a spirit of justice and disinterested benevolence, systems of government might safely be formed on this basis. It would then be sufficient for statesmen to ascertain what was right, and best adapted to promote the good of the community, and the people would cheerfully pursue it; and, pursuing this, would find their own good more effectually promoted, than by all the little discordant arts of a selfish mind.

The excellence of the most admired constitutions which have hitherto appeared in the world, has chiefly consisted in the balance of power being so distributed among the different orders of society, as that no one should materially oppress or injure the other. They have endeavoured to set boundaries to each other's encroachments, and contrived, in some degree, to counteract venality, corruption, and tumult. But all this supposes a corrupt state of society, and amounts to no more than making the best of things, taking them as they are. As things are, locks, keys, bolts and bars are necessary in our houses; but it were better if there were no occasion for them. I do not take upon me to say that things will ever be in such a state as that there shall be no need of these political precautions; but I believe they will be far less necessary than at present. If the Bible be true, the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; idolatry, and every species of false religion, shall be no more; the arts and instruments of war shall be laid aside, and exchanged for those of husbandry; the different tribes of man shall be united in one common band of brotherly love; slavery and oppression will cease; righteousness will be established in the earth; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

But "Christianity has been tried," it seems, "and found insufficient." That it has not been as yet, sufficient to banish unjust wars from the earth, is true; and it were more than wonderful if it had, seeing it has never yet been cordially embraced by the majority, nor perhaps by the preponderating part of any nation. Nevertheless it has had its influence. This gloomy writer himself acknowledges, that the state of society in Europe and America, that is to say in Christendom, is far preferable to what it is in other parts of the earth. Of the rest of the world he has no hope. Has Christianity done nothing in this case? That thousands in different nations are, by a cordial belief of it, rendered sober, just, disinterested, and peaceable; and that the state of society at large is greatly meliorated, has, I hope, been already proved.* To believe

* Chap. V, VI.

then in the future accomplishment of the foregoing prophecies is only to believe that what is already effected in individuals will be extended to the general body of mankind, or, at least, to such a proportion of them as shall be sufficient to give a preponderance in human affairs.

Moreover, the same book which declares that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, has foretold, in great variety of language, the downfall of the Papal Antichrist, and that by means of the same powers from which its dominion was first derived. We have, in part, seen the fulfilment of the one, and live in expectation of the other. We are not ignorant of the evil designs of Infidels; but we believe that God is above them, and that they are only instruments in his hand in the fulfilment of his word. While, therefore, we feel for the miseries of mankind, occasioned by the dreadful devastations of war, we sorrow not as those who have no hope; but are persuaded that all things, even now, are working together for good: and, while we pity individual sufferers, we cannot join the whining lamentations of interested men—*Alas, Alas that great city!* On the contrary, we feel disposed to join the song of the heavenly host, *Amen, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments.—Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready.*

If, according to the doctrine of Bolingbroke, Volney, and other Deists, we knew no other source of virtue and happiness than *self-love*, we should often be less happy than we are. Our blessedness is bound up with that of Christ and his followers throughout the world. His friends are our friends, and his enemies our enemies; they that seek his life seek ours; the prosperity of his kingdom is our prosperity, and we prefer it above our chief joy. From the public stock of blessedness being thus considered as the common property of every individual, arises a great and constant influx of enjoyment. Hence it is that, in times when temporal comforts fail, or family troubles depress, or a cloud hangs over our particular connexions, or death threatens to arrest us in a course of pleasing labour, we have still our resources of consolation. 'Affairs with

me are sinking; but *he must increase*.'—'My house is not so with God; but the kingdom of my Lord shall be established for ever.'—'His interest sinks in this congregation; but it rises elsewhere.'—'I die; but God will surely visit you!' Such is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and such the blessedness of those whose chief desire it is, *that they may see the good of his chosen, that they may rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and that they may glory with his inheritance*.

THE

GOSPEL ITS OWN WITNESS, &c.

PART II.

IN WHICH THE HARMONY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS CONSIDERED AS AN EVIDENCE OF ITS DIVINITY.

IF Christianity be an imposture, it may, like all other impostures, be detected. Falsehood may always be proved to clash with fact, with reason, or with itself; and often with them all. If, on the contrary, its origin be divine, it may be expected to bear the character of consistency, which distinguishes every other divine production. If the scriptures can be proved to harmonize with historic fact, with truth, with themselves, and with sober reason; they must, considering what they profess, be divinely inspired, and Christianity must be of God.

CHAPTER I.

THE HARMONY OF SCRIPTURE WITH HISTORIC FACT, EVINCED BY THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

If the pretence which the scriptures make to divine inspiration be unfounded, it can be no very difficult undertaking to prove it so. The sacred writers, besides abounding in history, doctrine, and morality, have dealt largely in prophecy: and this, not in the manner of the heathen priests, who made use of dark and dubious language. Their meaning, in general, is capable of being understood, even at this distance of time; and, in many instances, cannot be mistaken. The dispute, therefore, between believers and unbelievers, is reducible to a short issue. If scripture prophecy be divinely inspired, it will be accomplished: if it be imposture, it will not.

Let us suppose that, by digging in the earth, a chest were discovered, containing a number of ancient curiosities; and, among other things, a tablet inscribed with calculations of the most remarkable eclipses that should take place for a great while to come. These calculations are examined, and found to correspond with fact for more than two thousand years past. The inspectors cannot agree, perhaps, in deciding who was the author, whether it had not gone through several hands when it was deposited in the chest, and various other questions: but does this invalidate the truth of the calculations, or diminish the value of the tablet?

It cannot be objected, that events have been predicted from mere political foresight, which have actually come to pass; for, though this may have been the case in a few instances, wherein causes have already existed which afforded ground for the conclusion, yet it is impossible that the successive changes and revolutions of empires, some of which were more than a thousand years

distant, and depended on ten thousand unknown incidents, should be the objects of human speculation.

Mr. Paine seems to feel the difficulty attending his cause on this subject. His method of meeting it is not by soberly examining the agreement or disagreement of prophecy and history: that would not have suited his purpose. But, as though he had made a wonderful discovery, he in the first place goes about to prove that the prophets wrote *poetry;* and from hence would persuade us that a prophet was no other than an ancient Jewish bard. That the prophecies are what is now called poetic, Mr. Paine need not have given himself the trouble to prove, as no person of common understanding can doubt it: but the question is, Did not these writings, in whatever kind of language they were written, contain *predictions of future events?* yea, and of the most notorious and remarkable events, such as should form the grand outlines of history in the following ages? Mr. Paine will not deny this; nor will he soberly undertake to disprove that many of those events have already come to pass. He will, however, take a shorter method; a method more suited to his turn of mind. He will call the prophets "impostors and liars;" he will roundly assert, without a shadow of proof, and in defiance of historic evidence, that the prediction concerning Cyrus was written after the event took place: he will labor to pervert and explain away some few of the prophecies; and get rid of the rest by calling the writer "a false prophet," and his production "a book of falsehoods."* These are weapons worthy of Mr. Paine's warfare. But why all this rage against an ancient bard? Just now a prophet was only a poet, and the idea of a predictor of future events was not included in the meaning of the term. It seems, however, by this time, that Mr. Paine has found a number of *predictions* in the prophetic writings, to dismiss which he is obliged, as is usual with him in cases of emergency, to summon all his talents of misrepresentation and abuse.

I take no particular notice of this writer's attempts to explain away a few of the predictions of Isaiah, and other prophets. Those

* Age of Reason, *Part* V. pp. 53. 44. 47.

who have undertaken to answer him, have performed this part of the business. I shall only notice that he has not dared to meet the great body of scripture prophecy, or fairly to look it in the face.

To say nothing of the predictions of the destruction of mankind by a flood; of that of Sodom and Gomorrha by fire; of the descendants of Abraham being put in possession of Canaan within a limited period; and of various other events, the history as well as the prophecy of which is confined to the scriptures; let us review those predictions, the fulfilment of which has been recorded by historians who knew nothing of them, and, consequently, could have no design in their favour.

It is worthy of notice, that sacred history ends where profane history, that part of it at least which is commonly reckoned authentic, begins. Prior to the Babylonish captivity, the scriptural writers were in the habit of narrating the leading events of their country, and of incidentally introducing those of the surrounding nations: but shortly after this time the great changes in the world began to be recorded by other hands, as Herodotus, Xenophon and others. From this period they dealt chiefly in prophecy, leaving it to common historians to record its fulfilment.

Mr. Paine says, the scripture prophecies are "a book of falsehoods." Let us examine this charge. Isaiah, above a hundred years before the captivity, predicted the destruction of the Babylonish empire by the Medes and Persians, and Judah's consequent deliverance. *The plunderer is plundered, and the destroyer is destroyed: Go up, O Elam; beseige, O Media: all the crying thereof have I made to cease.** Ask Herodotus and Xenophon, Was this a falsehood?

Daniel, fourteen years before the establishment of the Medo-Persian dominion by the taking of Babylon, described that dominion with its conquests, and the superiority of the Persian influence to that of the Median, under the symbol of a ram with two horns *I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and, behold, there stood by the river*

* Lowth's translation of Isaiah xxi. 2. Other prophecies of the same event may be seen in Isa. xiii. xiv. xxi. xliii. 14—17. xliv. 28. xlv. 1—4. xlvii. Jer. xxv. 12—26, l. li. Hab. ii.

a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but the one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. This is expounded as follows: *The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.** Ask the afore-mentioned historians, Was this a falsehood?

The same Daniel, at the same time, two hundred and twenty-three years before the event, predicted the overthrow of this Medo-Persian dominion, by the arms of Greece, under the command of Alexander; and described the latter government under the symbol of a he-goat, with a notable horn between his eyes. *As I was considering, behold a he-goat came from the west, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns; and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.* The exposition of this vision follows: *The rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.*† Ask Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, and other historians of those times, Was this a falsehood?

The same Daniel, at the same time, two hundred and thirty years before the event, predicted the death of Alexander, and the division of his empire among four of his principal commanders, each of whom had an extensive dominion. *The he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones, towards the four winds of heaven.* The interpretation of this was as follows: *Now the great horn*

* Dan. viii. 3, 4. 20. See also Chap. vii. 5.

† Dan. viii. 5—7. 21. See also Chap. xi. 2—4.

*being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.** Ask the aforementioned historians of those times, Was this a falsehood?

The same Daniel, at the same time, three hundred and eighty years before the event, foretold the outrageous reign, and sudden death of Antiocus Epiphanes, king of Syria: particularly that by flattery and treachery he should accomplish his end, and on account of the degeneracy of the Jews, should be permitted for a time to ravish their country, interrupt their ordinary course of worship, profane their temple, and persecute, even to death, those who refused to comply with his heathen abominations: but that, in the midst of his career, he should be cut off by a sudden visitation from heaven. *And out of one of them* (the four branches of the Grecian empire) *came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice, by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised and prospered.* Of this the following is the exposition: *In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many; he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*†

Daniel also foretels, in the eleventh chapter of his prophecies, the wars between this king of Syria and Ptolemy Philometer, king of Egypt; with the interposition of the Romans, whose ambassadors should come over in *ships from Chittim*, and compel him to

* Dan. viii, 8. 22. See also Chap. vii. 6.

† Dan. viii. 9—12. 23—25.

desist: also that, being thus disappointed of his object in Egypt, he should return full of wrath and indignation to his own land, and wreak his vengeance upon the Jews, whose country lay in his way, though they had done nothing to offend him. I will not say, ask Josephus, Diodorus Siculus, and Polybius, if these were falsehoods; ask Porphyry, a professed enemy to the holy scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, and who wrote against them about the middle of the third century. He has proved, from the testimony of six or seven historians of those times, that these predictions were all exactly fulfilled; and like Mr. Paine by the Prophecies concerning Cyrus, is driven *merely on account of their being true*, to fly in the face of historic evidence, and maintain that they could not be the production of Daniel, but must have been written by some Jew after the events took place.*

As, in the eighth and eleventh chapters of his prophecies, Daniel has foretold the Persian and Grecian governments, with the subdivision of the latter, and how they should affect the Jewish people; so, in the seventh chapter, he has, in connexion with them, foretold the government of Rome. This singular empire he represents as exceeding all that has gone before it in power and terror; and as that of Greece, soon after the death of Alexander, should be divided into four kingdoms, signified by the four heads of the third beast, so this, it is foretold, should be at the time of its dissolution, divided into ten kingdoms, which are signified by the ten horns of the fourth beast. Ask universal history, Is this a falsehood? Those who adopt the cause of porphyry must, in this instance desert his hypothesis; they cannot say that this part of the prophecy was written by some Jew after the event took place, seeing Porphyry himself has acknowledged its existence some hundred of years before it was accomplished.

The predictions of this prophet did not end here: he at the same time foretold that there should arise among the ten kingdoms, into which the Roman Empire should be broken, a power diverse from all the rest; *a little horn* which should *speak great words*

* See Prideaux's Connexion, *Part* I. Book II. VIII. *Part* II. Book III. where the accomplishment of all the foregoing events is clearly narrated, and the authorities cited.

against the Most High, and wear out the saints of the Most High; and that this power should continue until *a time, and times, and the dividing of time.* At the end of this period, he adds, *the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy unto the end.* Are these falsehoods? Let the history of the last twelve hundred years, and the present state of the Papal hierarchy, determine.

Passing over the predictions of the Messiah, whose birth, place of nativity, time of appearance, manner of life, doctrine, miracles, death and resurrection, were each particularly pointed out;* let us examine a few principles from the New Testament. Our Lord Jesus Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and limited the time of its accomplishment to the then *present generation.*† Ask Josephus, the Jewish historian, Is this a falsehood?

It was intimated, at the same time, that the Jewish people should not only fall by the edge of the sword, but that great numbers of them should be *led away captive into all nations;* and that *Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.*‡ Ask the present descendants of that unhappy people, Is this a falsehood?

The Apostle of the Gentiles foretold that there should be a *falling away*, or a grand apostacy in the Christian Church; wherein *the man of sin should be revealed, even the son of perdition; who would oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: and who as God would sit in the temple of God, showing himself to be God.*§ Also in his Epistle to Timothy: *Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*‖

* Isa. ix. 6. Micah v. 2. Dan. ix. 20—27. Isa. xlii. 2. xxxv. 5, 6. liii Psa. xvi. 10, 11. † Matt. xxiv. 1—35. Luke xxi. ‡ Luke xxi. 24.
§ 2 Thes. ii. 3, 4. ‖ 2 Tim. iv. 1—3.

A large proportion of the Apocalypse of John respects this grand apostacy, and the corrupt community in which it was accomplished. He describes it with great variety of expressions. On some accounts it is represented under the form of a *city*, on others of a *beast*, and on others of a *woman sitting upon a beast.* That we might be at no loss to distinguish it on its appearance, it is intimated that it should not be so much a civil as an apostate ecclesiastical power: it is a *harlot*, opposed to the bride, the Lamb's wife; and that it should greatly abound in wealth and worldly grandeur: *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls;* that its dominion should not be confined to its own immediate territories: *Power was given it over all kingdoms and tongues and nations;*—that its authority should not be derived from its own conquests, but from the voluntary, consent of a number of independent kingdoms to come under its yoke: *The kings of the earth have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast;*—that it should be distinguished by its blasphemies, idolatries, and persecuting spirit: *Upon her were the names of blasphemy. They should make an image of the beast, and as many as would not worship the image of the beast were to be killed. And the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints;*—that its persecutions should extend to such a length as for no man to be allowed the common rights of men, unless he became subject to it: *No man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name;*—that its power should continue for *a time, times, and half a time, forty and two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days;* during which long period God's witnesses should prophesy in sackcloth, be driven as into a wilderness, and, and as it were, slain, and their bodies lie unburied;—finally, that they who gave it an existence, should be the instruments of taking it away: *The kings*, or powers, *of the earth shall hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire.** Whether all or any part of this be falsehood, let the history and observation determine.

It has often been observed, that the prophecies of the Messiah were so numerous and explicit, that at the time of his appearance

* Rev. xi. xii. xvii.

there was a general expectation of it, not only in Judea, but in all the neighbouring nations; and is not the same thing observable at this time, of the fall of Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and the general spread of the gospel?

Once more: The sacred writers have predicted the opposition which Christianity should encounter, and described the characters from whom it should proceed: *In the last days*, say they, *perilous times, shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures, more than the lovers of God.* Again: *There shall be mockers in the last time, who shall walk after their own ungodly lusts; filthy dreamers, who defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.** Let Mr. Paine, and other Infidels, consider well the above picture, and ask their own consciences, Is this a falsehood?

Bishop Newton, in his *Dissertations*, has clearly evinced the fulfilment of several of these and other scripture-prophecies; and has shown that some of them are fulfilling at this day. To those Dissertations I refer the reader. Enough has been said to enable us to determine which production it is that deserves to be called "a book of falsehoods,"—the prophecies of scripture, or the *Age of Reason*.

* 2 Tim. iii. 1—4. Jude.

CHAPTER II.

THE HARMONY OF SCRIPTURE WITH TRUTH, EVINCED FROM ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE DICTATES OF AN ENLIGHTENED CONSCIENCE, AND THE RESULT OF THE CLOSEST OBSERVATION.

If a brazen mirror were found on some remote, uninhabited island, it might be a doubtful matter how it came thither; but if it properly reflected objects, there could be no doubt of its being a real mirror.

The Bible was written with the professed design of being *profitable for reproof;* nor was there ever a book so adapted to the purpose, or so effectual in its operation in disclosing the inward workings of the human mind. Thousands can bear witness, from experience, that it is *quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Its entrance into the mind gives light: and light which discovers the works of darkness. Far from flattering the vices of mankind, it charges, without ceremony, every son of Adam with possessing the heart of an apostate. This charge it brings home to the conscience, not only by its pure precepts, and awful threatenings, but oftentimes by the very invitations and promises of mercy; which, while they cheer the heart with lively hope, carry *conviction* by their *import* to the very soul. In reading other books you may admire the ingenuity of the writer; but here your attention is turned inward. Read it but seriously, and your heart will answer to its descriptions. It will touch the secret springs of sensibility; and if you have any ingenuousness of mind towards God, the tears of grief,

mingled with those of hope and gratitude, will, ere you are aware, trickle from your eyes.

To whatever particular vices you may have been addicted, here you will discover your likeness; and that, not as by a comic representation on the theatre, which, where it reclaims one person by shaming him out of his follies, corrupts a thousand; but in a way that will bring conviction to your bosom.

Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ? Such was the reasoning of the woman of Samaria; and who could have reasoned better? That which makes manifest must be light. But this reasoning is applicable to other things, as well as to the Messiahship of Jesus. No man can forbear saying of that book, that doctrine, or that preaching which tells him all that ever he did, Is not this the truth? The satisfaction afforded by such evidence approaches near to iutuitive certainty; it is having the witness in ourselves.

Should it be objected, that though this may satisfy our own minds, yet it can afford no evidence to others; I answer, It is true, that they who shun the light cannot be supposed to possess that evidence of its being what it is, as those who have come to it that their deeds may be made manifest; yet even they, if at all acquainted with the Bible, must be aware that the likenesses which it draws are, in a considerable degree, their own. It is not to serious Christians only, that the gospel is a mirror. Many who never look into that perfect law of liberty from choice and delight, so as to be blessed in their work, but only glance at it in a transient and occasional way, yet perceive so much of their own character in it, as to be convinced that it is right, and that they are wrong. The secret conviction of thousands who heard the word, and do it not, resembles that of Pharaoh, *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.* The impressions of such people, it is true, are frequently short in their duration: like a man who seeth his natural face in a glass, they go away, and straightway forget what manner of persons they are: but the aversion which they discover seriously to resume the subject, places it beyond all reasonable doubt, that, let their hearts be as they may, the scriptures have commended themselves to their consciences. They have felt the

point of this two-edged sword, and are not disposed to renew the encounter. That this is the case not only with nominal Christians, but with a great number of professed Deists, is manifest from the acknowledgments of such men as the Earl of Rochester, and many others who have relented on the near approach of death. This is often a time in which conscience must and will be heard; and, too often for the happiness of surviving acquaintances, it proclaims to the world, that the grand source of their hatred to the Bible has been that for which Ahab hated Micaiah—its prophesying no good concerning them.

The scriptures are a mirror in which we see not only individual characters, our own and others, but the state of things as they move on in the great world. They show us the spring heads whence all the malignant streams of idolatry, atheism, corruption, persecution, war, and of every other evil originate; and, by showing us the origin of these destructive maladies, clearly instruct us wherein must consist their cure.

It has already been observed,* that Christian morality is summed up in the love of God and our neighbour, and that these principles carried to their full extent, would render the world a paradise. But the scriptures teach us that man is a rebel against his Maker; that his carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; that, instead of loving God, or even man in the order which is required, men are become *lovers of their own selves*, and neither God nor man are regarded but as they are found necessary to subserve their wishes.

This single principle of human depravity, supposing it to be true, will fully account for all the moral disorders in the world; and the actual existence of those disorders, unless they can be better accounted for, must go to prove the truth of this principle, and by consequence, of the Christian system which rests upon it.

We are affected in considering the *idolatry* of so great a part of the human race; but we are not surprised at it. If men be destitute of the love of God, it is natural to suppose they will endeavour to banish him from their thoughts, and, provided the state of

* *Part.* I Chap. III

society will admit of it, from their worship ; substituting gods more congenial with their inclinations, and in the worship of which they can indulge themselves without fear or control.

Neither are we surprised at the *practical atheism* which abounds among unbelievers, and even among nominal Christians, in European nations. If the state of things be such as to render gross idolatry, inadmissible, still, if aversion to God predominate, it will show itself in a neglect of all worship, and of all serious conversation, or devout exercises ; in a wish to think there is no God, and no hereafter; and in endeavours to banish every thing of a religious nature from society. Or, if this cannot be, and any thing relating to such subjects become matter of discussion, they will be so explained away as that nothing shall be left which can approve itself to an upright heart. The holiness of the divine character will be kept out of sight, his precepts disregarded, and morality itself made to consist in something destitue of all true virtue.

We are not surprised at the *corruptions* which Christianity has undergone. Christianity itself, as we have already seen, foretold it ; and the doctrine of human depravity fully accounts for it. When the Christian religion was adopted by the state, it is natural to suppose there were great numbers of unprincipled men who professed it ; and where its leading characters in any age are of this description, it will certainly be corrupted. The pure doctrine of Christ is given up in favour of some flesh pleasing system, the holy precepts of Christian morality are lowered to the standard of ordinary practice, and the worship and ordinances of Christ are mingled with superstition and modelled to a worldly temper. It was thus that Judaism was corrupted by the old Pharisees, and Christianity by the Papal hierarchy.

The success with which *evil men and seducers* meet in propagating false doctrine, is no more than, from the present state of things may be expected. So long as a large proportion of the professors of Christianity receive not the love of the truth, error will be certain to meet with a welcome reception. The grossest impostor has only to advance a system suited to corrupt nature, to

assert it with effrontery, and to flatter his adherents with being the favourites of heaven, and he will be followed.*

The *persecutions* which have been carried on against religion are grievous to humanity, and equally repugnant to justice and to good policy: but they are not in the least surprising. There was not a truth more prominent in our Saviour's addresses to his followers than this, that, having *received his word, the world would hate them; because they were not of the world, as he was not of the world.* When he sent them forth to preach the gospel, it was *as sheep among wolves;* and they were treated accordingly. When he took leave of them, previously to his death, he left them his *peace*, as knowing that, in the world, they should have tribulation. All this was no more than might be expected; for if it be the character of true religion that it sets itself against every vicious propensity of the human heart, it is natural to suppose that every one who is under the dominion of such propensity will feel averse from true religion, and from those who adhere to it. The manner in which mankind have stood affected towards godly men has been nearly uniform from the beginning. Cain slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, mocking: as he that was born after the flesh then persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Why was Jerusalem a burdensome stone to the nations? Why were they continually forming leagues to root out its remembrance from the

* Men are much more easily deceived in these matters than in the ordinary concerns of life. If a London Merchant were to open warehouses in different parts of the city, and make it his business to traduce the characters and commodities of all other merchants; if his opposition were directed especially against men of probity and eminence, whose situations were contiguous to his own; in fine, if the only traders in the kingdom who could obtain his good word were certain agents whom he had stationed in different parts of the country for the purpose of retailing his wares; would not his designs be evident? He might puff, and pretend to have the good of the public much at heart; but the public would despise him, as a man whose object was a fortune, and whose practices evinced that he would hesitate at no means to accomplish his end. Yet, in religion, such deceptions may be practised with success.

earth? The same spirit that was discovered by Edom, Moab, and the children of Ammon towards Israel, was apparent in Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, and their companions, towards Judah; and the part acted of the Horonite, the Ammonite, and the Arabian, was afterwards re-acted, with additional zeal, by Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the governors and people of Israel. Those who could agree in nothing else could agree in this. The persecutions of pagan and papal Rome, and of all who have symbolized with her, have been only a continuation of the same system: and the descriptions which deistical historians give of these works of darkness, notwithstanding their pretended regard to religious liberty, bear witness that they allow the deeds of their fathers, and inherit their dispositions. The same malignant spirit which was discovered by the heathens toward the ancient Israelites, is discoverable in all the writings of unbelievers toward that people to this day. It is true, they are more reconciled to the modern Jews; and for a very plain reason: they feel them to be near akin to themselves. Herod and Pilate were made friends by the crucifixion of Christ. Since that time, the old enmity has been transferred to believing Gentiles, who, being grafted into the Jewish olive, and partaking of its advantages, partake also of its persecutions: and by how much the Christian church, at any period, has exceeded the Jewish in purity and spirituality, by so much more fierce has the wrath of a wicked world burned against it.

After all the pains that unbelievers take to shift the charge of persecution, and lay it at the door of Christianity, it is manifest, to an observant eye, that there is a deep-rooted enmity in all wicked men, whether they be Pagans, Papists, Protestants, or Deists, towards all godly men, of every nation, name, and denomination. This enmity, it is true, is not suffered to operate according to its native tendency. He who holdeth the winds in his hands, restrains it. Men are withheld by laws, by policy, by interests, by education, by respect, by regard founded on qualities distinct from religious, and by various other things. There are certain conjunctions of interests, especially, which occasionally require a temporary cessation of hostilities; and it may seem on such occasions as if wicked men were ashamed of their animosities, and were all on a sudden

become friendly to the followers of Christ. Thus, at the revolution in 1688, those who for more than twenty years had treated the non-conformists with unrelenting severity, when they found themselves in danger of being deprived of their places by a popish prince, courted their friendship, and promised not to persecute them any more. And thus, at the commencement of the French revolution, Deists, Catholics, and Protestants, who were engaged in one political cause, seemed to have forgotten their resentments, all amicably uniting together in the opening of a place for protestant worship. But let not the servants of Christ imagine that any temporary conjunction of interests will extinguish the ancient enmity. It may seem to be so for a time; and all things being under the control of providence, such a time may be designed as a season of respite for the faithful; but when self-interest has gained its end, if other worldly considerations do not interpose, things will return to their former channel. The enmity is not dead, but sleepeth.

Finally: the *wars* which, from the earliest period of history, have desolated the earth, grievous as they are to a feeling mind, contain in them nothing surprising. The scriptures, with singular propriety, describe the world as *a great sea*, which is ever casting up its mire and dirt; and great conquerors as so many *wild beasts*, which, in succession, rise from its troubled waters, and devour the inhabitants of the earth.* Nor is this all: they describe not only the fact, but the cause of it. Wars among men, as has been already stated,† have their *immediate* causes in *the lusts which war in their members:* but, besides this, the scripture leads us to a cause more remote, and of still greater importance. They denominate the sword of war, *the sword of the Lord*, and constantly intimate that it is one of those means by which he *pleadeth with all flesh*. A part of the curse entailed on men for their departure from the living God, consists in this, that, till they return to him, they shall not be able for any length of time, to maintain amity among themselves. It appears to be one of those laws by which God governs the world, that, PEOPLE ENGAGED IN AN EVIL CAUSE, HOWEVER

* Dan. vii. † *Part* I. Chap. VII.

HARMONIOUS THEY MAY BE IN THE OUTSET, SHALL PRESENTLY BE AT VARIANCE. Thus it was between Abimilech and the men of Shechem, as Jotham had forewarned them in his parable. Though at first they appeared to rejoice in each other; yet, in a little time, *fire came out from Abimelech, and devoured the men of Shechem, and fire came out from the men of Shechem, and devoured Abimelech.** Such is commonly the issue of all unprincipled confederacies, traitorous conspiracies, illegal combinations, and illicit amours. Union, in order to be lasting, requires to be cemented with honor. Where this is wanting, however appearances may for a while be flattering, all will prove transitory: mutual jealousies will produce mutual enmities, which are certain to issue in confusion and every evil work. These remarks are no less applicable to the whole human race, than to particular parts of it. Men have revolted from God; and yet think to live in harmony among themselves. God, in just judgment, appears to have determined the contrary; and that, till they return to him, they shall be given up to an evil spirit towards each other, and to the ravages of a succession of ambitious leaders, who shall destroy them in great numbers from the face of the earth. It is morally impossible, indeed, that it should be otherwise; for the same principle which induces them to renounce the divine goverment, dissolves the bands of human society. Supreme self-love is the origin of both, and is sufficient to account for all the disorder in the universe.

Candid reader, review the subject of this chapter. In the last, we traced the agreement of the holy scriptures with historic fact; in this, we have seen their correspondence with *living truth*, or with *things as they actually exist, in the mind and in the world.* Similar arguments might also have been drawn from the characters of believers and unbelievers. Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called in the early ages of Christianity; and it has been the same in every age. To the Jews the gospel was from the first a stumbling-block, and to philosophers foolishness; and such it continues to this day. The existence of the Jews as a distinct people, their dispersion, their attachment to the Old Testament, and

* Judges ix.

rejection of the New, their expectation of a Messiah, their acknowledgment of the truth of the historical facts concerning our Lord, the malignity of their spirit; in a word, their exact resemblance, even at this remote period, to the picture drawn of them in the New Testament, are facts which cannot be controverted. Judge impartially: Is there any thing in all this that bears the marks of imposture? A connoisseur will distinguish between paintings taken from life, and such as are the works of mere imagination. An accurate judge of moral painting will do the same. If the scriptures gave false descriptions of men and things, if they flattered the vices of mankind, or exhibited the moral state of the world contrary to well-known fact, you would conclude them to be a work of falsehood. On the other hand, if they speak of things as they are; if conscience echo to their charges, and fact comport with their representations, they must have been taken from life: and you must conclude them to be what they profess to be—*a work of truth*. And, since the objects described are many of them beyond the ken of human observation, you must conclude that they are not only a work of truth, but, what they also profess to be—*The true sayings of God*.

CHAPTER III.

THE HARMONY OF SCRIPTURE WITH ITS OWN PROFESSIONS, ARGUED FROM THE SPIRIT AND STYLE IN WHICH IT IS WRITTEN.

If the scriptures be what they profess to be—the word of God; it may be presumed that the spirit which they breathe, and even the style in which they are composed, will be different from what can be found in any other productions. It is true, that, having been communicated through human mediums, we may expect them, in a measure, to be humanized; the peculiar turn and talents of each writer will be visible, and this will give them the character of variety; but, amidst all this variety, a mind capable of discerning the divine excellence will plainly perceive in them the finger of God.

With respect to *style*, though it is not on the natural, but the moral, or rather the *holy* beauties of scripture that I would lay the principal stress; yet something may be observed of the other. So far as the beauty of language consists in its freedom from affectation, and in its conformity to the nature of the subject, it may be expected that a book written by holy men, inspired of God, will be possessed of this excellence. A divinely-inspired production will not only be free from such blemishes as arise from vanity, and other evil dispositions of the mind, but will abound in those beauties which never fail to attend the genuine exercises of modesty, sensibility, and godly simplicity. It will reject the meretricious ornaments of art; but it will possess the more substantial beauties of nature. That this is true of the scriptures has been proved by several able writers.*

* See Blackwall's Sacred Classicks. Also Melmoth's Sublime and Beautiful of scripture; to which is added, Dwight's Dissertation on the Poetry, History, and Eloquence of the Bible.

Mr. Paine, however, can see nothing great, majestic, or worthy of God, in any part of the Bible. Among the numerous terms of reproach with which he honours it, he is pleased to censure the writings of Isaiah as "bombast, beneath the genius of a schoolboy;" and to compare the command of the great Creator, in the first chapter of Genesis, *Let there be light*, to the "imperative manner of speaking used by a conjuror."* This writer has given us no example of the bombast from Isaiah. Bombast is that species of writing in which great swelling words are used to convey little ideas. But is it thus in the writings of Isaiah? *And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.—Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity.* Are the ideas too little, in these instances, for the words? The prophets wrote in a poetic style; and how could they write otherwise? Poetry is the language of passion; and such as theirs, of passion raised and inflamed by great and affecting objects. Their language is not that of common poetry, but, as an elegant writer expresses it, "It is the burst of inspiration."

As to the objection against the sublimity of the passage in the first chapter of Genesis, it is sufficient to observe, that there is nothing, be it ever so majestic and worthy of God, but a profane and ludicrous imagination may distort it. A rainbow may be compared to a fiddle-stick; but it does not follow that it is an object

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. p. 108. Note.

of equal insignificance. Thunder and lightning may be imitated by a character not less contemptible than a conjuror; but should any one infer that there is nothing more grand, more awful, or more worthy of God, in these displays of nature, than in the exhibitions of a country show, he would prove himself to be possessed of but a small portion of either wit or good sense.

I do not pretend to any great judgment in the beauties of composition: but there are persons of far superior judgment to this writer who have expressed themselves in a very different language. The late Sir Wm. Jones, who for learning and taste, as well as character, has left but few equals, thus expresses himself: "I have regularly and attentively read these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independent of its divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed."

The acknowledgments of Rousseau, likewise, whose taste for fine writing, and whose freedom from prejudice in favour of Christianity, none will call in question, will serve to confront the assertions of Mr. Paine. After declaring that as there were some proofs in favour of Revelation which he could not invalidate, so there were many objections against it which he could not resolve; that he neither admitted, nor rejected it; and that he rejected only the *obligation* of submitting to it; he goes on to acknowledge as follows: "I will confess to you farther, that the majesty of the scripture strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction—how mean—how contemptible—are they, compared with the scripture! Is it possible, that a book at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage whose history it contains should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the air of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of

mind! What subtilty! What truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and die, without weakness, and without ostentation?—Shall we suppose the Evangelic History a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction. On the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospels; the marks of whose truth are so striking and invincible, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."*

Rousseau's praises of the scripture remind us of the high encomiums bestowed by Balaam on the tabernacles of Israel. It is no unusual thing for men to admire that which they do not love.

Let us examine a little more minutely the *spirit* in which the scriptures are written. It is this which constitutes their *holy* beauty, distingnishes them from all other writings, and affords the strongest evidence of their being written by inspiration of God.

In recording historical events, the sacred writers *invariably eye the hand of God:* in some instances they entirely overlook second causes; and in others, where they are mentioned, it is only as instruments fulfilling the divine will. Events that came to pass according to the usual course of things, and in which an ordinary historian would have seen nothing divine, are recorded by them among the works of the Lord: *The Lord was very angry with Israel, and romoved them out of his sight.—And the Lord sent against Jehoiakim bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandnent of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight for the sins of Manasseh according to all that he*

* Works, Vol. V. pp. 215—218.

*did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed, (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood,) which the Lord would not pardon.**

In their *prophecies*, while they foretold the heaviest calamities upon nations, their own and others, and viewing the hand of God in all, acquiesced in them; as men they felt tenderly for their fellow-creatures, even for their enemies: *My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.—O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.*† When Israel was exposed to calamities, all the neighbouring nations, who hated them on account of their religion, exulted over them, the prophets who foretold it were tenderly affected by it: *I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh; for the shouting for thy summer-fruits, and for thy harvest, is fallen. And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the traders shall tread out no wine in their presses: I have made shouting to cease. Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kirharesh.**

The *miracles* which they record are distinguished from the signs and lying wonders of following ages, in that there is always to be seen in them an end worthy of God. The far greater part of them were works of pure compassion to the parties, and the whole of them of benevolence to society.

There is nothing in the scriptures adapted to gratify *presumptuous speculation* or *idle curiosity*. Such a spirit, on the contrary, is frequently checked, and every thing is directed to the renovation or improvement of the heart. The account given of the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, is not intended, as Mr. Henry observes, to describe things "as they are in themselves, and in their own nature, to satisfy the curious; but as they are in relation to this earth, to which they serve as *lights*; and this is enough

* 2 Kings xvii. 18. xxiv. 2—4.

† Jer. iv. 19. xlvii. 6. ‡ Isa. xvi. 9—11.

to furnish us with matter for praise and thanksgiving." The miracles of Jesus were never performed to gratify curiosity. If the afflicted, or any on their behalf, present their petition, it is invariably heard and answered; but if the Pharisees come and say, *Master, we would see a sign from thee;* or if Herod *hope to see a miracle done by him,* it is refused.* When one said to him, *Lord are there few that be saved?* he answered, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*†

There is nothing in the scriptures tending, in its own nature, to excite *levity* or *folly.* They sometimes deal in the most cutting irony; but it is never for the sake of displaying wit, or raising a laugh, but invariably for the accomplishment of a serious and important end. A serious mind finds every thing to gratify it, and nothing to offend it: and even the most profligate character, unless he read them in search of something which he may convert into ridicule, is impressed with awe by the pointed and solemn manner in which they address him.

It may be said of the scriptures, and of them only, that they are *free from affectation and vanity.* You may sometimes find things of this sort described by the sacred writers; but you will never discern any such spirit in the descriptions themselves. Yet, as men, they were subject to human imperfections: if, therefore, they had not been influenced by divine inspiration, blemishes of this kind must have appeared in their writings, as well in those of other men. But in what instance have they assumed a character which does not belong to them; or discovered a wish to be thought more religious, more learned, or more accomplished in any way than they were? Nor were they less free from vanity than from affectation. They were as far from making the most of what they were, as from aiming to appear what they were not. Instead of trumpeting their own praise, or aiming to transmit their fame to posterity, several of them have not so much as put their names to their writings; and those who have, are generally out of sight. As you read their history, they seldom occur to your thoughts.

* Matt. xii. 38. Luke xxiii. 8, 9. † Luke xiii. 24. See also xxi. 5—19.

Who thinks of the Evangelists when reading the *four Gospels;* or of Luke while reading the *Acts of the Apostles?* Mr. Paine weaves the laurel on his own brows, vainly boasting that he has "written a book under the greatest disadvantages, which no Bible believer can answer;" and that, with his axe upon his shoulder, like another Sennacherib, he has passed through, and cut down the tall cedars of our Lebanon.* But thus did not the sacred writers, even with regard to heathenism, because of the fear of God. Paul in one instance, for the sake of answering an important end, was compelled to speak the truth of himself, and to appear to boast; yet it is easy to perceive how much it was against his inclination. A *boaster* and a *fool* were, in his account, synonymous terms.†

The sacred writers, while they respect magistracy, and frown upon faction, tumult, and sedition, are *never known to flatter the great.* Compare the fustian eloquence of Tertullus with the manly speeches of Paul. Did he flatter Felix? No; he *reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come; and Felix trembled.* Did he flatter Festus or even Agrippa? No; the highest compliment which proceeded from him was, that *he knew* the lattter *to be expert in all customs and questions among the Jews,* and to maintain the divine inspiration of the prophets; which declaration, with the whole of this admirable apology, contained only the words of truth and soberness.

They discover no *anxiety to guard against seeming inconsistencies,* either with themselves or one another. In works of impos ture, especially where a number of persons are concerned, there is need of great care and caution, lest one part should contradict another; and such caution is easily perceived. But the sacred writers appear to have had no such concern about them. Conscious that all they wrote was true, they left it to prove its own consistency. Their productions possess consistency; but it is not a studied one, nor always apparent at first sight: it is that consistency which is certain to accompany truth.‡

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. *Preface,* p. vi. and p. 64. † 2 Cor. xii.

‡ "There is one argument," says Mr. Wilberforce, in his late excellent Treatise, "which impresses my mind with particular force. This is the great

There is an *inimitable simplicity in all their writings, and a feeling sense of what they write.* They come to the point without ceremony or preamble, and having told the truth, leave it without mingling their own reflections. This remark is particularly exemplified by the four Evangelists, in narrating the treatment of their Lord. Writers who had felt less would have said more.

There is something in all they say which leaves behind it a sensation produced by no other writings; something peculiarly suited to the mind when in its most serious frames, oppressed by affliction, or thoughtful about a future life; something which gives melancholy itself a charm, and produces tears more delicious to the mind than the most high-flavoured earthly enjoyments. By what name shall I express it? It is *a savour of life, a savour of God, an unction from the Holy One.*

variety of the *kinds* of evidence which have been adduced in proof of Christianity, and the confirmation thereby afforded of its truth:—the proof from prophecy—from miracles—from the character of Christ—from that of his apostles—from the nature of the doctrines of Christianity—from the nature and excellence of her practical precepts—from the accordance we have lately pointed out between the doctrinal and practical system of Christianity, whether considered each in itself, or in their mutual relation to each other—from other species of internal evidence, afforded in the more abundance as the sacred records have been scrutinized with great care—from the accounts of cotemporary, or nearly cotemporary writers—from the impossibility of accounting on any other supposition than that of the truth of Christianity, for its promulgation, and early prevalence: these and other lines of argument have all been brought forward, and urged by different writers, in proportion as they have struck the minds of different observers more or less forcibly. Now, granting that some obscure and obliterate men, residing in a distant province of the Roman empire, had plotted to impose a forgery upon the world; though some foundation for the imposture might, and indeed must, have been attempted to be laid; it seems, at least to my understanding, morally impossible that so many species of proofs, and all so strong, should have lent their concurrent aid, and have united their joint force, in the establishment of the falsehood. It may assist the reader in estimating the value of this argument, to consider upon how different a footing, in this respect, has rested every other religious system, without exception, which was ever proposed to the world; and indeed every other historical fact, of which the truth has been at all contested."*

* Practical View, &c. pp. 361—368. Third Edition.

Mr. Paine can see no beauty in the New-testament narratives: to him there appears nothing but *imposture*, *folly*, *contradiction*, *falsehood*, and every thing that marks an evil cause. And I suppose he could say the same of the things narrated; of the labours, tears, temptations, and sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and of every thing else in the New Testament. Mr. Paine, however, is not the only instance wherein men have lacked understanding. The Jews saw no beauty in the Saviour that they should desire him: and there are persons who can see no beauty in any of the works of God. Creation is to them a blank. But though *the eyes of a fool are at the ends of the earth*, for want of objects to attract them, yet *wisdom is before him that understandeth*. If Mr. Paine can see no beauty in the sacred pages, it does not follow that there is no beauty to be seen. Let any person of candour and discernment read over the four Evangelists and judge whether they bear the marks of imposture. If he have any difficulty, it will be in preserving the character of a critic. Unless he be perpetually on his guard, he will insensibly lose sight of the writers, and be all enamoured of the great object concerning which they write. In reading the last nine chapters of John, he will perceive the writer to be deeply affected. Though a long time had elapsed since the events had taken place, and he was far advanced in years; yet his heart was manifestly overwhelmed with his subject. There is reason to think that the things which Mr. Paine attempts to ridicule, drew tears from his eyes while he narrated them; as an ingenious mind will find it difficult to review the narrative without similar sensations.

Mr. Paine is pleased to say, "Any person that could read and write might have written such a book as the Bible:" but nothing can be farther from the truth. It were saying but little, to affirm that *he* could not produce a single page or sentence that would have a similar effect. Stranger as he has proved himself to be to the love of God and righteousness, he could not communicate what he does not feel. The croaking raven might as well endeavour to imitate the voice of the dove, or the song of the nightingale, as he attempt to emulate the holy scriptures. Mr. Paine's spirit is sufficiently apparent in his page, and that of the sacred writers in

theirs. So far from writing as they wrote, he cannot understand their writings. That which the scriptures teach on this subject is sufficiently verified in him, and all others of his spirit: *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.* As easily might the loveliness of chastity be perceived, or the pleasures of a good conscience appreciated, by a debauchee, as the things of God be received by a mind like that of Mr. Paine.

Finally: If the Bible be the word of God, it may be expected that *such an authority and divine sanction should accompany it*, that, while a candid mind shall presently perceive its evidence, those who read it either with negligence or prejudice, shall only be confirmed in their unbelief. It is fit that God's word should not be trifled with. When the Pharisees captiously demanded a sign, or miracle, they were sent away without one. They might go if they pleased, and report the inability of Jesus to work a miracle. The evidence attending the resurrection of Christ is of this description. He had exhibited proofs of his divine mission publicly, and before the eyes of all men; but, seeing they were obstinately rejected, he told his enemies that they should see him no more till he should come on a different occasion:* and they saw him no more. They might insist, if they pleased, that the testimony of his disciples, who witnessed his resurrection, was insufficient. It is thus that heresies, offences, and scandals are permitted in the Christian church; that they who are approved may be made manifest; and that occasion may be furnished for them who seek occasion, to reproach religion and persist in their unbelief. If men choose delusion, God also will choose to give them up to it. *The scorner shall seek wisdom and shall not find it;* and the word of life shall be a *savour of death unto death to them that perish.* Mr. Paine, when he wrote the First Part of his *Age of Reason*, was without a Bible. Afterwards, he tells us, us he procured one; or to use his own schoolboy language, "a Bible and a Testament; and I have found them," he adds, "to be much worse books than I had conceived."† In all this there is nothing sur-

* Matt. xxiii. 39. † Age of Reason, *Part* II. *Preface*, p. xii.

prising. On the contrary, if such a scorner had found wisdom, the scriptures themselves had not been fulfilled.*

If an insolent coxcomb had been of opinion that Sir Isaac Newton was a mere ignoramus in philosophy, and had gone into his company that he might catechise, and afterwards, as occasion should offer, expose him; it is not unlikely that this great writer, perceiving his arrogance, would have suffered him to depart without answering his questions, even though he might know at the time that his unfavorable opinion of him would thereby be the more confirmed. Let us but come to the scriptures in a proper spirit, and we shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God: but if we approach them in a cavilling humour, we may expect not only to remain in ignorance, but to be hardened more and more in unbelief.

* Prov. xiv. 6

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONSISTENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, PARTICULARLY THAT OF SALVATION THROUGH A MEDIATOR, WITH SOBER REASON.

If there be a God who created us; if we have all sinned against him; and if there be reason to believe that he will call us to account for our conduct; all which principles are admitted by Mr. Paine;* a gloomy prospect must needs present itself, sufficient indeed to render man "the slave of terror." It is not in the power of this writer, nor of any man living who rejects the Bible, to assure us that pardon will have any place in the divine government; and, however light he may make of the scripture doctrine of hell, He that calls men to account for their deeds, will be at no loss how or where to punish them. But, allowing that God is disposed to show mercy to the guilty, the question is, Whether his doing so by or without a mediator, be most consistent with what we know of fitness or propriety?

That pardon is bestowed through a mediator in a vast variety of instances among men, cannot be denied; and that it is proper it should be so, must be evident to every thinking mind. All who are acquainted with the common affairs of life, must be aware of the necessity of such proceedings, and the good effects of them upon society.†

It is far less *humbling* for an offender to be pardoned at his own request, than through the interposition of a third person: for, in the one case, he may be led to think that it was his virtue and pen-

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 1. *Part* II. p. 100.

† See President Edwards' Remarks on Important Theological Controversies, Chap. VI.

itence which influenced the decision; whereas, in the other, he is compelled to feel his own unworthiness; and this may be one reason why the mediation of Christ is so offensive. It is no wonder, indeed, that those who deny humility to be a virtue,* should be disgusted with a doctrine; the professed object of which is to abase the pride of man.

As forgiveness without a mediator is less humbling to the offender, so it provides less for the *honour* of the offended, than a contrary proceeding. Many a compassionate heart has longed to go forth, like David toward Absalom; but, from a just sense of wounded authority, could not tell how to effect it; and has greatly desired that some common friend would interpose, to save his honour. He has wished to remit the sentence; but has felt the want of a mediator, at the instance of whom he might give effect to his desires; and exercise mercy without seeming to be regardless of justice. An offender who should object to a mediator, would be justly considered as hardened in impenitence, and regardless of the honour of the offended: and it is difficult to say what other construction can be put upon the objections of sinners to the mediation of Christ.

Again: to exercise pardon without a mediator, would be fixing no such *stigma upon the evil of the offence*, as is done by a contrary mode of proceeding. Every man feels that those faults which may be overlooked on a mere acknowledgment, are not of a very heinous nature; they are such as arise from inadvertence, rather than from ill design; and include little more than an error of the judgment. On the other hand, every man feels that the calling in of a third person is making much of the offence, treating it as a serious affair, a breach that is not to be lightly passed over. This may be another reason why the mediation of Christ is so offensive to the adversaries of the gospel. It is no wonder that men who are continually speaking of moral evil under the palliating name of *error*, *frailty*, *imperfection*, and the like, should spurn at a doctrine, the implication of which *condemns* it to everlasting infamy.†

* Volney's Law of Nature, p. 49. † Rom. viii. 3.

Finally: to bestow pardon without a mediator would be treating the offence as *private*, or passing over it as a matter unknown, an affair which does not affect the well-being of society, and which therefore requires no public manifestation of displeasure against it. Many a notorious offender would, doubtless, wish matters to be thus conducted, and from an aversion to public exposure, would feel strong objections to the formal interposition of a third person. Whether this may not be another reason of dislike to the mediation of Christ, I shall not decide; but of this I am fully satisfied, that the want of a proper sense of the great evil of sin, as it affects the moral government of the universe, is a reason why its adversaries see no necessity for it, nor fitness in it. They prove, by all their writings, that they have no delight in the moral excellency of the divine nature, no just sense of the glory of moral government, and no proper views of the pernicious and wide-extended influence of sin upon the moral system: is it any wonder, therefore, that they should be unconcerned about the plague being stayed by a sacrifice? Such views are too enlarged for their selfish and contracted minds. The only object of their care, even in their most serious moments, is to escape punishment: for the honor of God, and the real good of creation, they discover no concern.

The amount is this: If it be indeed improper for a guilty creature to lie low before his Creator; if it be unfit that any regard should be paid to the honour of his character; if the offence committed against him be of so small account that it is unnecessary for him to express any displeasure against it; and if it have been so private and insulated in its operations, as in no way to affect the well-being of the moral system; the doctrine of forgiveness through a mediator, is unreasonable. But if the contrary be true; if it be proper for a guilty creature to lie in the dust before his offended Creator, if the honour of the divine character deserve the first and highest regard; if moral evil be the greatest of all evils, and require, even where it is forgiven, a strong expression of divine displeasure against it; and if its pernicious influence be such that, if suffered to operate according to its native tendency, it would dethrone the Almighty, and desolate the universe, the doctrine in question must accord with the plainest dictates of reason.

The sense of mankind, with regard to the necessity of a mediator, may be illustrated by the following similitude. Let us suppose a division of the army of one of the wisest and best of kings, through the evil counsel of a foreign enemy, to have been disaffected to his government; and that, without any provocation on his part, they traitorously conspired against his crown and life. The attempt failed; and the offenders were seized, disarmed, tried by the laws of their country, and condemned to die. A respite however was granted them, during his majesty's pleasure. At this solemn period, while every part of the army and of the empire was expecting the fatal order for execution, the king was employed in meditating mercy. But how could mercy be shown? 'To make light of a conspiracy,' said he to his friends, 'would loosen the bands of good government: other divisions of the army might be tempted to follow their example; and the nation at large be in danger of imputing it to tameness, fear, or some unworthy motive.'

Every one felt, in this case, the necessity of a mediator, and agreed as to the general line of conduct proper for him to pursue. 'He must not attempt,' say they, 'to compromise the difference by dividing the blame: that would make things worse. He must justify the king, and condemn the outrage committed against him; he must offer, if possible, some honorable expedient, by means of which the bestowment of pardon shall not relax, but strengthen just authority; he must convince the conspirators of their crime, and introduce them in the character of supplicants; and mercy must be shown them out of respect to him, or for his sake.'

But who could be found to mediate in such a cause? This was an important question. A work of this kind, it was allowed on all hands, required singular qualifications. 'He must be *perfectly clear of any participation in the offence*,' said one, 'or inclination to favour it; for to pardon conspirators at the intercession of one who is friendly to their cause, would not only be making light of their crime, but giving a sanction to it.

'He must,' said another, 'be one who on account of his character and services *stands high in the esteem of the king and of the public*: for to mediate in such a cause, is to become, in a sort, responsible for the issue. A mediator, in effect, pledges his honour

that no evil will result to the state from the granting of his request. But if a mean opinion be entertained of him, no trust can be placed in him, and, consequently, no good impression would be made by his mediation on the public mind.

"I conceive it is necessary,' said a third, 'that the weight of the mediation should bear a proportion to the magnitude of the crime, and to the value of the favour requested; and that for this end it is proper he should be a person of *great dignity*. For his majesty to pardon a company of conspirators at the intercession of one of their former comrades, or of any other obscure character, even though he might be a worthy man, would convey a very diminutive idea of the evil of the offence.'

A fourth remarked, that 'he must possess a *tender compassion* towards the unhappy offenders, or he would not cordially interest himself on their behalf.'

Finally: It was suggested by a fifth, 'that for the greater fitness of the proceeding, it would be proper that some *relation* or *connexion* should subsist between the parties. We feel the propriety,' said he, 'of forgiving an offence at the intercession of a father, or a brother; or, if it be committed by a soldier, of his commanding officer. Without some kind of previous relation or connexion, a mediation would have the appearance of an arbitrary and formal process, and prove but little interesting to the hearts of the community.'

Such were the reasonings of the king's friends; but where to find the character in whom these qualifications were united, and what particular expedient could be devised, by means of which, instead of relaxing, pardon should strengthen just authority, were subjects too difficult for them to resolve.

Meanwhile, the king and his son, whom he greatly loved, and whom he had appointed generalissimo of all his forces, had retired from the campany, and were conversing about the matter which attracted the general attention.

'My son!' said the benevolent sovereign, 'what can be done in behalf of these unhappy men? To order them for execution violates every feeling of my heart: yet to pardon them is dangerous. The army, and even the empire, would be under a strong

temptation to think lightly of rebellion. If mercy be exercised, it must be through a mediator; and who is qualified to mediate in such a cause? And what expedient can be devised by means of which pardon shall not relax, but strengthen just authority? Speak, my son, and say what measures can be pursued?'

'My father!' said the prince, 'I feel the insult offered to your person and government, and the injury thereby aimed at the empire at large. They have transgressed without cause, and deserve to die without mercy. Yet I also feel for them. I have the heart of a soldier. I cannot endure to witness their execution. What shall I say? On me be this wrong! Let me suffer in their stead. Inflict on me as much as is necessary to impress the army and the nation with a just sense of the evil, and of the importance of good order and faithful allegiance. Let it be in their presence, and in the presence of all assembled. When this is done, let them be permitted to implore and receive your majesty's pardon in my name. If any man refuse so to implore, and so to receive it, let him die the death!'

'My son!' replied the king, 'you have expressed my heart! The same things have occupied my mind; but it was my desire that you should be voluntary in the undertaking. It shall be as you have said, I shall be satisfied; justice itself will be satisfied; and I pledge my honour that you also shall be satisfied in seeing the happy effects of your disinterested conduct. Propriety requires that I stand aloof in the day of your affliction; but I will not leave you utterly, nor suffer the beloved of my soul to remain in that condition. A temporary affliction on your part will be more than equivolent to death on theirs. The dignity of your person and character will render the sufferings of an hour of greater account as to the impression of the public mind, than if all the rebellious had been executed: and by how much I am known to have loved you, by so much will my compassion to them, and my displeasure against their wicked conduct, be made manifest. Go, my son, assume the likeness of a criminal, and suffer in their place!'

The gracious design being communicated at court, all were struck with it. Those who had reasoned on the qualifications of a mediator, saw that in the prince all were united, and were filled

with admiration: but that he should be willing to suffer in the place of rebels, was beyond all that could have been asked or thought. Yet, seeing he himself had generously proposed it, would survive his sufferings, and reap the reward of them, they cordially acquiesced. The only difficulty that was started was among the judges of the realm. They, at first, questioned whether the proceeding were admissible. 'The law,' said they, 'makes provision for the transfer of debts, but not of crimes. Its language is *The soul that sinneth shall die.*' But when they came to view things on a more enlarged scale, considering it as an expedient on an extraordinary occasion, and perceived that the *spirit* of the law would be preserved, and all the ends of good government answered, they were satisfied. 'It is not a measure,' said they, 'for which the law provides: yet it is not contrary to the law, but above it.'

The day appointed arrived. The prince appeared, and suffered as a criminal. The hearts of the king's friends bled at every stroke, and burned with indignation against the conduct which rendered it necessary. His enemies, however, even some of those for whom he suffered, continuing to be disaffected, added to the affliction, by deriding and insulting him all the time. At a proper period, he was rescued from their outrage. Returning to the palace, amidst the tears and shouts of the loyal spectators, the suffering hero was embraced by his royal father; who, in addition to the natural affection which he bore to him as a son, loved him for his singular interposition at such a crisis: 'Sit thou,' said he, 'at my right hand! Though the threatenings of the law be not literally accomplished, yet the spirit of them is preserved. The honour of good government is secured, and the end of punishment more effectually answered, than if all the rebels had been sacrificed. Ask of me what I shall give thee! No favour can be too great to be bestowed, even upon the unworthiest, nor any crime too aggravated to be forgiven, in thy name. I will grant thee according to thine own heart! Ask of me, my son, what I shall give thee!'

He asked for the offenders to be introduced as supplicants at the feet of his father, for the forgiveness of their crimes, and for

the direction of affairs till order and happiness should be perfectly restored.

A proclamation addressed to the conspirators was now issued, stating what had been their conduct, what the conduct of the king, and what of the prince. Messengers also were appointed to carry it, with orders to read it publicly, and to expostulate with them individually, beseeching them to be reconciled to their offended sovereign, and to assure them that if they rejected this, there remained no more hope of mercy.

A spectator would suppose, that in mercy so freely offered, and so honourably communicated, every one would have acquiesced; and if reason had governed the offenders, it had been so: but many among them continued under the influence of disaffection, and disaffection gives a false colouring to every thing.

The time of the respite having proved longer than it was at first expected, some had begun to amuse themselves with idle speculations, flattering themselves that their fault was a mere trifle, and that it certainly would be passed over. Indeed the greater part of them had turned their attention to other things, concluding that the king was not in good earnest.

When the proclamation was read, many paid no manner of attention to it; some insinuated that the messengers were interested men, and that there might be no truth in what they said; and some even abused them as impostors. So, having delivered their message, they withdrew: and the rebels finding themselves alone, such of them as paid any attention to the subject, expressed their minds as follows:—

'My heart,' says one, 'rises against every part of this proceeding. Why all this ado about a few words spoken one to another? Can such a message as this have proceeded from the king? What have we done so much against him, that so much should be made of it? No petition of ours, it seems, would avail any thing; and nothing that we could say or do could be regarded, unless presented in the name of a third person. Surely if we present a petition in our own names, in which we beg pardon, and promise not to repeat the offence, this might suffice. Even this is more than I

can find in my heart to comply with; but every thing beyond it is unreasonable; and who can believe that the king can desire it?

'If a third person,' says another, 'must be concerned in the affair, what occasion is there for one so high in rank and dignity? To stand in need of *such* a mediator must stamp our characters with everlasting infamy. It is very unreasonable: who can believe it? If the king be just and good, as they say he is, how can he wish thus publicly to expose us?'

'I observe,' says a third, 'that *the mediator is wholly on the king's side;* and one, whom though he affects to pity us, we have, from the outset, considered as no less our enemy than the king himself. If, indeed, he could compromise matters, and would allow that we had our provocations, and would promise us redress, and an easier yoke in future, I should feel inclined to hearken: but if he have no concessions to offer, I can never be reconciled.'

'I believe,' says a fourth, 'that the king knows very well that we have not had justice done us, and therefore this meditation business is introduced to make us amends for the injury. It is an affair settled somehow betwixt him and his son. They call it *grace;* and I am not much concerned what they call it, so that my life is spared: but this I say, If he had not made this or some kind of provision, I should have thought him a tyrant.'

'You are all wrong,' says a fifth: I comprehend the design, and am well pleased with it. I hate the government as much as any of you: but I love the mediator; for I understand it is his intention to deliver me from its tyranny. He has paid the debt, the king is satisfied, and I am free. I will sue out for my right, and demand my liberty!'

In addition to this, one of the company observed, he did not see what the greater part of them had to do with the proclamation, unless it were to give it a hearing, which they had done already. 'For, said he, 'pardon is promised only to them who are *willing* to submit, and it is well known that many of us are unwilling; nor *can* we alter our minds on this subject.

After a while, however, some of them were brought to relent. They thought upon the subject matter of the proclamation, were

convinced of the justness of its statements, reflected upon their evil conduct, and were sincerely sorry on account of it. And now the meditation of the prince appeared in a very different light. They cordially said *Amen* to every part of the proceeding. The very things which gave such offence while their hearts were disaffected, now appeared to them fit, and right, and glorious. 'It is fit,' say they, 'that the king should be honoured, and that we should be humbled; for we have *transgressed without cause.* It is right that no regard should be paid to any petition of ours, for its own sake; for we have done deeds worthy of death. It is glorious that we should be saved at the intercession of so honourable a personage. The dignity of his character, together with his surprising condescension and goodness, impresses us more than any thing else, and fills our hearts with penitence, confidence, and love. That which in the proclamation is called grace, *is* grace; for we are utterly unworthy of it; and if we had all suffered according to our sentence, the king and his throne had been guiltless. We embrace the meditation of the prince, not as a reparation for an injury, but as a single instance of mercy. And far be it from us, that we should consider it as designed to deliver us from our original and just allegiance to his majesty's government! No, rather, it is intended to restore us to it. We love our intercessor, and will implore forgiveness in his name; but we also love our sovereign, and long to prostrate ourselves at his feet. We rejoice in the satisfaction which the prince has made, and all our hopes of mercy are founded upon it: but we have no notion of being freed by it previously to our acquiescence in it. Nor do we desire any other kind of freedom than that which while it remits the just sentence of the law, restores us to his majesty's government. O that we were once clear of this hateful and horrid conspiracy, and might be permitted to serve him with affection and fidelity all the days of our life! We cannot suspect the *sincerity* of the invitation, or acquit our companions on the score of *unwillingness.* Why should we? We do not on this account acquit ourselves. On the contrary, it is the remembrance of our unwillingness that now cuts us to the heart. We well remember

to what it was owing that we *could not* be satisfied with the just government of the king, and afterwards *could not* comply with the invitations of mercy: it was because we were under the dominion of a *disaffected spirit*; a spirit which, wicked as it is in itself, it would be more wicked to justify. Our counsel is, therefore, the same as that of his majesty's messengers, with whom we now take our stand. Let us lay aside this cavilling humour, repent, and sue for mercy in the way prescribed, ere mercy be hid from our eyes!'

The reader, in applying this supposed case to the mediation of Christ, will do me the justice to remember, that I do not pretend to have perfectly represented it. Probably there is no similitude fully adequate to the purpose. The distinction between the Father and the Son, is not the same as that which subsists between a father and a son among men: the latter are two separate beings: but to assert this of the former, would be inconsistent with the divine unity. Nor can any thing be found analogous to the doctrine of divine influence, by which the redemption of Christ is caried into effect. And with respect to the innocent voluntarily suffering for the guilty, in a few extraordinary instances this principle may be adopted; but the management and application of it generally require more wisdom and more power than mortals possess. We may by the help of a machine, collect a few sparks of the electrical fluid, and produce an effect somewhat resembling that of lightning: but we cannot cause it to blaze like the Almighty, nor *thunder with a voice like Him.*

Imperfect, however, as the foregoing similitude may appear in some respects, it is sufficient to show the fallacy of Mr. Paine's reasoning. "The doctrine of Redemption," says this writer, "has for its basis an idea of pecuniary justice, and not that of moral justice. If I owe a person money, and cannot pay him, and he threatens to put me in prison, another person can take the debt upon himself, and pay it for me: but if I have committed a *crime*, every circumstance of the case is changed. Moral justice cannot take the innocent for the guilty, even if the innocent would offer itself. To suppose justice to do this, is to destroy the principle of its existence, which is the thing itself. It is then no longer jus-

tice; but is indiscriminate revenge."* This objection, which is the same for substance as has been frequently urged by Socinians as well as Deists, is founded in misrepresentation. It is not true that redemption has for its basis the idea of pecuniary justice, and and not that of moral justice. That sin is called a debt, and the death of Christ a *price*, a *ransom*, &c. is true; but it is no unusual thing for moral obligations and deliverances, to be expressed in language borrowed from pecuniary transactions. The obligations of a son to a father, are commonly expressed by such terms as owing and paying: he *owes* a debt of obedience, and in yielding it he *pays* a debt of gratitude. The same may be said of an obligation to punishment. A murderer owes his life to the justice of his country; and when he suffers, he is said to *pay* the awful debt. So also if a great character by suffering death, could deliver his country, such deliverance would be spoken of as obtained by the *price* of blood. No one mistakes these things by understanding them of pecuniary transactions. In such connexions, every one perceives that the terms are used not literally, but metaphorically; and it is thus that they are to be understood with reference to the death of Christ. As sin is not a pecuniary, but a moral debt; so the atonement for it is not a pecuniary, but a moral ransom.

There is doubtless a sufficient analogy between pecuniary and moral proceedings, to justify the use of such language, both in scripture and in common life; and it is easy to perceive the advantages which which arise from it; as besides conveying much important truth, it renders it peculiarly impressive to the mind. But it is not always safe to reason from the former to the latter; much less is it just to affirm, that the latter has for its basis every principle which pertains to the former. The deliverance effected by the prince, in the case before stated, might, with propriety, be called a *redemption;* and the recollection of it, under this idea, would be very impressive to the minds of those who were delivered. They would scarcely be able to see or think of their Commander in Chief, even though it might be years after the event, without being reminded of the *price* at which their pardon was obtained, and drop-

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 20.

ping a tear of ingenuous grief over their unworthy conduct on this account. Yet it would not be just to say, that this redemption had for its basis an idea of pecuniary justice, and not that of moral justice. It was moral justice which in this case was satisfied : not, however, in its ordinary form, but as exercised on an extraordinary occasion ; not the letter, but the spirit of it.

The scripture doctrine of atonement being conveyed in language borrowed from pecuniary transactions, is not only improved by unbelivers into an argument against the truth of the gospel, but has been the occasion of many errors among the professors of Christianity. Socinus, on this ground, attempts to explain away the necessity of a satisfaction. " God," says he, " is our *Creditor*. Our sins are *debts* which we have contracted with him ; but every one may yield up his right, and more especially God, who is the supreme Lord of all, and extolled in the scriptures for his liberality and goodness. Hence, then, it is evident that God can pardon sins without any satisfaction received."* *Others*, who profess to embrace the doctrine of satisfaction, have on the same ground, perverted and abused it ; objecting to the propriety of humble and continued applications for mercy, and presuming to claim the forgiveness of their sins, past, present, and to come, as their legal right, and what it would be unjust in the Supreme Being, having received complete satisfaction, to withhold.

To the reasoning of Socinus, Dr. Owen judiciously replies, by distinguishing between right, as it respects *debts*, and as it respects *government*. The former, he allows, may be given up without a satisfaction, but not the latter. " Our sins," he adds, " are called debts, not properly, but metaphorically."† This answer equally applies to those who pervert the doctrine, as well as those who deny it : for though in matters of debt and credit a full satisfaction from a surety excludes the idea of *free* pardon on the part of the creditor, and admits of a *claim* on the part of the debtor, yet it is otherwise in relation to crimes. In the interposition of the prince, as stated above, an honourable expedient was adopted, by

* Treatise of Jesus Christ the Saviour, *Part* III. Chap. I.

† Dissertation on Divine Justice, Chap. IX. Section VII. VIII.

means of which the sovereign was satisfied, and the exercise of mercy rendered consistent with just authority: but there was no less grace in the act of forgiveness, than if it had been without a satisfaction. However well pleased the king might be with the conduct of his son, the freeness of pardon was not at all diminished by it; nor must the criminals come before him as claimants, but as supplicants, imploring mercy in the mediator's name.

Such are the leading ideas which the scriptures give us of redemption by Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul especially teaches this doctrine with great precision: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chirist Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.** From this passage we may remark, First: That the *grace* of God, as taught in the scriptures, is not that kind of liberality which Socinians and Deists ascribe to him, which sets aside the necessity of a satisfaction. Free grace, according to Paul, requires a *propitiation*, even the shedding of the Saviour's *blood*, a medium through which it may be honourably communicated. Secondly: Redemption by Jesus Christ was accomplished, not by a satisfaction that should preclude the exercise of grace in forgiveness, but in which, the displeasure of God against sin being manifested, mercy to the sinner might be exercised without any suspicion of his having relinquished his regards for righteousness. In *setting forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, he declared his righteousness for the remission of sins.* Thirdly: the righteousness of God was not only declared when Christ was made a propitiatory sacrifice; but continues to be manifested in the acceptance of believers through his name. He appears as *just* while acting the part of a justifier towards every one that *believeth in Jesus.* Fourthly: That which is here applied to the blessings of forgiveness and acceptance with God, is applicable to all other spiritual

* Rom. iii. 24—26.

blessings: all, according to the scriptures, are freely communicated through the same distinguished medium. See Ephes. i.*

* The Christian reader, it is presumed, may, from hence, obtain a clear view of the ends answered by the death of Christ, a subject which has occupied much attention among divines. Some have asserted, that Christ by his satisfaction accomplished this only, "That God now, consistently with the honour of his justice, may pardon (returning) sinners if he willeth so to do." This is, doubtless, true, as far as it goes; but it makes no provision for the return of the sinner. This scheme, therefore, leaves the sinner to perish in impenitence and unbelief, and the Saviour without any security of seeing of the travail of his soul. For how can a sinner return without the power of the Holy Spirit? And the Holy Spirit, equally with every other spiritual blessing, is given in consideration of the death of Christ. Others, to remedy this defect, have considered the death of Christ as *purchasing* repentance and faith, as well as all other spiritual blessings, on behalf of the elect. The writer of these pages acknowledges he never could perceive that any clear or determinate idea, was conveyed by the term, *purchase*, in this connexion; nor does it appear to him to be applicable to the subject, unless it be in an improper or figurative sense. He has no doubt of the atonement of Christ being a perfect satisfaction to divine justice; nor of his being *worthy* of all that was conferred upon him, and upon us for his sake; nor of that which to *us* is sovereign mercy being to *him* an exercise of remunerative justice: but he wishes it to be considered, Whether the moral Governor of the world was laid under such a kind of obligation to show mercy to sinners as a creditor is under to discharge a debtor, on having received full satisfaction at the hands of a surety? If he be, the writer is unable to perceive how there can be any room for free forgiveness on the part of God; or how it can be said that justice and grace harmonize in a sinner's salvation. Nothing is farther from his intention than to depreciate the merit of his Lord and Saviour: but he considers merit as of two kinds; either on account of a *benefit* conferred, which on the footing of justice requires an equal return, or of something done or suffered which is *worthy of being rewarded*, by a Being distinguished by his love of righteousness. In the first sense, it cannot, as he supposes, be exercised towards an infinite and perfect Being. The goodness of Christ himself, in this way, *extendeth not to him*. It is in the last sense that the scriptures appear to him to represent the merit of the Redeemer. That he "who was in the form of God, should take upon him the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of men, and humble himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," was so glorious an undertaking, and so acceptable to the Father, that on this account he "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to

These remarks may suffice to show, not only that Mr. Paine's assertion has no truth in it, but that all those professors of Christianity who have adopted his principle, have so far deviated from the doctrine of redemption as it is taught in the scriptures.

As to what Mr. Paine alleges, that the innocent suffering for the guilty, even though it be with his own consent, is contrary to every principle of moral justice, he affirms the same of God's *visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.** But this is a truth evident by universal experience. It is seen every day, in every part of the world. If Mr. Paine indulge in intemperance, and leave children behind him, they may feel the consequences of his

* Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 4. Note.

come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Nor was this all: so *well pleased* was he with all that he did and suffered, as to reward it not only with honours conferred upon himself, but with blessings on sinners for his sake. Whatever is asked *in his name*, it is given us.

It is thus, as the writer apprehends, that A WAY WAS OPENED BY THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST, FOR THE FREE AND CONSISTENT EXERCISE OF MERCY IN ALL THE METHODS WHICH SOVEREIGN WISDOM SAW FIT TO ADOPT.

There are *three* kinds of blessings in particular, which God, out of regard to the death of his Son, bestows upon men: First, He sends forth the gospel of salvation, accompanied with a free and indefinite invitation to embrace it, and an assurance that whosoever complies with the invitation, (for which there is no ability wanting in any man who possesses an honest heart,) shall have everlasting life. This favour is bestowed ON SINNERS AS SINNERS. God *giveth the true bread from heaven* in this way to many who never receive it. He inviteth those to the gospel supper who refuse and *make light of it.*—John vi. 32—36. Matt. xxii. 4, 5, Secondly, He bestows his Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify the soul: gives a new heart and a right spirit, and takes away the heart of stone. *Christ is exalted to give repentance.* Acts v. 31. *Unto us it is given in behalf of Christ, to believe in him.* Phil. i. 29. *We have obtained like precious faith through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. i. 1. This favor is conferred on ELECT SINNERS. See Acts xiii. 48. Rom. viii. 28—30. Thirdly, Through the same medium is given the free pardon of all our sins, acceptance with God, power to become the sons of God, and the promise of everlasting life. *Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.* 1 John, ii. 12. *God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* Ephes. iv. 32. *We are accepted in the beloved.* Ephes. i. 6. *By means of his death we receive the promise of eternal inheritance.* Heb. ix. 15. This kind of blessings is conferred on BELIEVING SINNERS.

misconduct when he is in the grave. The sins of the father may thus be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation. It would, however, be their *affliction* only, and not their punishment. Yet such visitations are wisely ordered as a motive to sobriety. Nor is it between parents and children only that such a connexion exists, as that the happiness of one depends upon the conduct of others; a slight survey of society, in its various relations, must convince us that the same principle pervades creation. To call this injustice, is to fly in the face of the Creator. With such an objector I have nothing to do: *He that reproveth God, let him answer it.*

If the idea of the innocent suffering in the room of the guilty, were in all cases inadmissible, and utterly repugnant to the human understanding, how came the use of *expiatory sacrifices* to prevail as it has, in every age and nation? Whether the idea first proceeded from a divine command, as Christians generally believe, or whatever was its origin, it has approved itself to the minds of men, and not of the most uncultivated part of mankind only, but of the most learned and polite. The sacrifices of the Gentiles, it is true, were full of superstition, and widely different, as might be expected, from those which were regulated by the scriptures; but the general principle is the same: all agree in the idea of the displeasure of Deity being appeasable by an innocent victim being sacrificed in the place of the guilty. The idea of expiatory sacrifices, and of a mediation founded upon them, is beautifully expressed in the book of Job; a book not only of great antiquity, but which seems to have obtained the approbation of Mr. Paine, having, as he supposed, been written by a Gentile. *And it was so, that, after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the*

*Naamathite, went and did according as the Lord commanded them; the Lord also accepted Job.** The objections which are now made to the sacrifice of Christ, equally apply to all expiatory sacrifices; the offering up of which, had not the former superseded them, would have continued to this day.

If an innocent character offer to die in the room of a guilty fellow-creature, it is not ordinarily accepted, nor would it be proper that it should. For he may have no just right to dispose of his life; or if he have, he has no power to resume it: there may likewise be no such relation between the parties, as that the suffering of the one should express displeasure against the conduct of the other. Besides this, there may be no great and good end accomplished to society by such a substitution: the loss sustained by the death of the one, might be equal, if not superior, to the gain from the life of the other. If the evil to be endured might be survived; if the relation between the parties were such, that in the sufferings of the one, mankind would be impressed with the evil of the other; and if, by such a proceeding, great advantage would accrue to society, instead of being accounted inadmissible, it would be reckoned right, and wise, and good. If a dignified individual, by enduring some temporary severity from an offended nation, could appease their displeasure, and thereby save his country from the destroying sword, who would not admire his disinterested conduct? And if the offended from motives of humanity, were contented with expressing their displeasure, by transferring the effect of it from a whole nation to an individual who thus stepped forward on their behalf, Would their conduct be censured as "indiscriminate revenge?" The truth is, The atonement of Christ affords a display of Justice on too large a scale, and on too humbling a principle, to approve itself to a contracted, selfish, and haughty mind.

* Chap. xlii. 7—9.

CHAPTER V.

THE CONSISTENCY OF THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION WITH THE MODERN OPINION OF THE MAGNITUDE OF CREATION.

It is common for Deists to impute the progress of their principles to *the prevalence of true philosophy*. The world, they say, is more enlightened; and, a great number of discoveries are progressively making, which render the credibility of the scriptures more and more suspicious. It is now a commonly received opinion, for instance, among men of science, that this world is but a point in creation; that every planet is a world, and all the fixed stars so many suns in the centres of so many systems of worlds; and that, as every part of creation within our knowledge teems with life, and as God has made nothing in vain, it is highly probable that all these worlds are inhabited by intelligent beings, who are capable of knowing and adoring their Creator. But if this be true, how incredible is it that so great a portion of regard should be exercised by the Supreme Being towards man as the scriptures represent: how incredible, especially it must appear to a thinking mind, that Deity should become incarnate, should take human nature into the most intimate union with himself, and thereby raise it to such singular eminency in the scale of being; though, compared with the whole of creation, if we comprehend even the whole species, it be less than a nest of insects compared with the unnumbered millions of animated beings which inhabit the earth.

This objection, there is reason to think, has had a very considerable influence on the speculating part of mankind. Mr. Paine, in the first part of his *Age of Reason*, (pp. 40—47.) has laboured,

after his manner, to make the most of it, and thereby to disparage Christianity. "Though it is not a direct article of the Christian system," he says, "that this world which we inhabit is the whole of the habitable creation; yet it is so worked up therewith, from what is called the Mosaic account of the creation, the story of Eve and the apple, and the counterpart of that story—the death of the Son of God, that to believe otherwise, that is, to believe that God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the Christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot be held together in the same mind; and he who thinks he believes both, has thought but little of either." (p. 40.)

Again: Having discoursed on the vast extent of creation, he asks, "But in the midst of these reflections, what are we to think of the Christian system of faith, that forms itself upon the idea of only one world, and that of no greater extent than twenty-five thousand miles?"—"From whence could arise the solitary and strange conceit, that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependant on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world, bucause they say one man and one woman had eaten an apple? And, on the other hand, Are we to suppose that every world in the boundless creation had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a Redeemer? In this case, the person who is irreverently called the Son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do, than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarcely a momentary interval of life." (p 46.)

To animadvert upon all the extravagant and offensive things even in so small a part of Mr. Paine's performance as the above quotation, would be an irksome task. A few remarks, however, may not be improper.

First: Though Mr. Paine is pleased to say in his usual style of naked assertion, that "the two beliefs cannot be held together; and that he who thinks he believes both, has thought but little of either;" yet he cannot be ignorant that many who have admitted the one, have at the same time held fast the other. Mr. Paine is certainly not over-loaded with modesty, when comparing his own

abilities and acquisitions with those of other men; but I am inclined to think, that, with all his assurance, he will not pretend that Bacon, or Boyle, or Newton, to mention no more, had thought but little of philosophy or Christianity. I imagine it would be within the compass of truth, were I to say, that they bestowed twenty times more thought upon these subjects than ever Mr. Paine did. His extreme ignorance of Christianity at least, is manifest, by the numerous gross blunders of which he has been detected.

Secondly: Supposing the scripture account of the creation to be inconsistent with the ideas which modern philosophers entertain of its extent; yet it is not what Mr. Paine represents it. It certainly does not teach "that this world which we inhabit is the whole of the habitable creation." Mr. Paine will not deny that it exhibits a world of happiness, and a world of misery; though in the career of his extravagance, he seems to have overlooked it.

Thirdly: If the two beliefs, as Mr. Paine calls them, cannot be consistently held together, we need not be at a loss to determine which to relinquish. All the reasoning in favour of a multiplicity of worlds, inhabited by intelligent beings, amounts to no more than *a strong probability*.

No man can properly be said to believe it: it is not a matter of faith, but of opinion. It is an opinion too that has taken place of other opinions, which, in their day, were admired by the philosophical part of mankind, as much as this is in ours. Mr. Paine seems to wish to have it thought, that the doctrine of a multiplicity of inhabited worlds, is a matter of *demonstration*: but the existence of a number of heavenly bodies, whose revolutions are under the direction of certain laws, and whose returns, therefore, are the objects of human calculation; does not prove that they are all inhabited by intelligent beings. I do not deny, that from other considerations, the thing may be highly probable; but it is no more than a probability. Now, before we give up a doctrine, which, if it were even to prove fallacious, has no dangerous consequences attending it; and which, if it should be found a truth, involves our eternal salvation, we should endeavour to have a more solid ground than mere opinion, on which to take our stand.

But I do not wish to avail myself of these observations, as I am under no apprehensions that the cause in which I engage requires them. ADMITTING THAT THE INTELLIGENT CREATION IS AS EXTENSIVE AS MODERN PHILOSOPHY SUPPOSES, THE CREDIBILITY OF REDEMPTION IS NOT THEREBY WEAKENED; BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, IN MANY RESPECTS, IS STRENGTHENED AND AGGRANDIZED. I shall offer a few observations on each of the branches of the above position.

The scripture doctrine of redemption, it is acknowledged, supposes that man, mean and little as he is in the scale of being, has occupied a peculiar portion of the divine regard. It requires to be noticed, however, that the enemies of revelation, in order it should seem to give the greater force to their objection, diminish the importance of man, as a creature of God, beyond what its friends can admit. Though Mr. Paine expresses his "hope of happiness beyond this life;" and though some other deistical writers have admitted the immortality of the soul; yet this is more than others of them will allow. The hope of a future state, as we have seen, is objected to by many of them, as a *selfish* principle; and others of them have attempted to hold it up to ridicule. But the immortality of man is a doctrine which redemption supposes; and, if this be allowed, man is not so insignificant a being as they might wish to consider him. A being that possesses an immortal mind, a mind capable of increasing knowledge, and, consequently of increasing happiness or misery, in an endless duration, cannot be insignificant. It is no exaggeration to say, that the salvation of one soul, according to the scriptural account of things, is of inconceivably greater moment than the temporal salvation of a nation, or of all the nations in the world, for ten thousand ages. The eternal salvation, therefore, of a number of lost sinners, which no man can number, however it may be a matter of infinite condescension in the great Supreme to accomplish, is not an object for creatures, even the most exalted, to consider as of small account.

Having premised thus much, I shall proceed, in the first place, to offer a few observations in proof that THERE IS NOTHING IN THE

SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION, WHICH IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE MODERN OPINION OF THE MAGNITUDE OF CREATION.

1. *Let creation be as extensive as it may, and the number of worlds be multiplied to the utmost boundary to which imagination can reach, there is no proof that any of them, except men and angels, have apostatized from God.* If our world be only a small province, so to speak, of God's vast empire, there is reason to hope that it is the only part of it where sin has entered, except among the fallen angels, and that the endless myriads of intelligent beings in other worlds, are all the hearty friends of virtue, of order, and of God.

If this be true, (and there is nothing in philosophy or divinity I believe to discredit it,) then Mr. Paine need not have supposed, if he could have suppressed the pleasure of the witticism, that the Son of God would have to travel from world to world in the character of a Redeemer.

2. *Let creation be ever so extensive, there is nothing inconsistent with reason in supposing that some one particular part of it should be chosen out from the rest, as a theatre on which the great Author of all things would perform his most glorious works.* Every empire that has been founded in this world, has had some one particular spot where those actions were performed from whence its glory has arisen. The glory of the Cæsars was founded on the event of a battle fought near a very inconsiderable city: and why might not this world, though less than "twenty-five thousand miles in circumference," be chosen as the theatre on which God would bring about events that should fill his whole empire with glory and joy? It would be as reasonable to plead the insignificance of *Actium* or *Agincourt*, in objection to the competency of the victories there obtained (supposing them to have been on the side of righteousness) to fill the respective empires of Rome and Britain with glory, as that of our world to fill the whole empire of God with matter of joy and everlasting praise. The truth is, the comparative dimensions of our world is of no account. If it be large enough for the accomplishment of events which are sufficient to occupy the minds of all intelligencies, that is all that is required.

3. *If any one part of God's creation, rather than another, possessed a superior fitness to become a theatre on which he might display his glory, it should seem to be that part where the greatest efforts had been made to dishonour him.* A rebellious province in an empire would be the fittest place in it to display the justice, goodness, and benignity of a government. Here would naturally be erected the banner of righteousness; here the war would be carried on; here pardons and punishments to different characters would be awarded; and here the honours of the government would be established on such a basis, that the remotest parts of the empire might hear and fear, and learn obedience. The part that is diseased, whether in the body natural or the body politic, is the part to which the remedy is directed. Let there be what number of worlds there may, full of intelligent creatures; yet if there be but one world which is guilty and miserable, thither will be directed the operations of mercy. The good shepherd of the sheep will leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and seek and save that which is lost.

4. *The events brought to pass in this world, little and insignificant as it may be, are competent to fill all and every part of God's dominions with everlasting and increasing joy.* Mental enjoyment differs widely from corporeal: the bestowment of the one upon a great number of objects is necessarily attended with a division of it into parts; and those who receive a share of it, diminish the quantity remaining for others that come after them; but not so the other. An intellectual object requires only to be known, and it is equally capable of affording enjoyment to a million as to an individual, to a world as to those, and to the whole universe, be it ever so extensive, as to a world. If, as the scripture inform us, *God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory;* if there be enough in this *mysterious* transaction to fill with joy the hearts of all who believe it; if it be so interesting that the most exalted intelligences become comparatively indifferent to every other object, *desiring to look into it;* then is it sufficient to *fill all things,* and to exhibit the divine glory *in all places of his dominion.**

* I Pet. i. 12. Ephes. iv. 10. Psa. ciii. 22.

Mr. Paine allows that it is not a direct article of the Christian system that there is not a plurality of inhabited worlds; yet, he affirms, it is so *worked up* with the scripture account, that to believe the latter we must relinquish the former, as little and ridiculous.

The scriptures, it is true, do not teach the doctrine of a multitude of inhabited worlds: but neither do they teach the contrary. Neither the one nor the other forms any part of their design. The object they keep in view, though Mr. Paine may term it, "little and ridiculous," is infinitely superior to this, both as to utility and magnitude. They were not given to teach us astronomy, or geography, or civil government, or any science which relates to the present life only; therefore they do not determine upon any system of any of these sciencies. These are things upon which reason is competent to judge, sufficiently at least for all the purposes of human life, without a revelation from heaven. The great object of revelation is, to instruct us in things which pertain to our everlasting peace; and as to other things, even the rise and fall of the mightiest empires, they are only touched in an incidental manner, as the mention of them might be necessary to higher purposes. The great empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, are predicted and described in the scriptures, by the rising and ravaging of so many *beasts* of prey. Speaking of the European part of the earth, which was inhabited by the posterity of Japheth, they do not go about to give an exact, geographical description of it; but by a synecdoche, call it the *isles of the Gentiles*;* and this, as I suppose, because its eastern boundary, the Archipelago, or Grecian *Islands*, were situated contiguous to the Holy Land. And thus when speaking of the whole creation, they call it *the heavens and the earth*, as being the whole that comes within the reach of our senses.

It is no dishonour to the scriptures that they keep to their professed end. Though they give us no system of astronomy; yet they urge us to study the works of God, and teach us to adore him upon every discovery. Though they give us no system of geog-

* Gen. x. 5. Isa. xlix. 1.

raphy, yet they encourage us to avail ourselves of observation and experience to obtain one; seeing the whole earth is in prophecy given to the Messiah, and is marked out as the field in which his servants are to labour. Though they determine not upon any mode or system of civil governments, yet they teach obedience in civil matters, to all. And though their attention be mainly directed to things which pertain to the life to come; yet, by attending to their instructions, we are also fitted for the labours and sufferings of the present life.

The scriptures are written in a *popular* style, as best adapted to their great end. If the salvation of philosophers only had been their object, the language might possibly have been somewhat different; though even this may be a matter of doubt, since the style is suited to the subject, and to the great end which they had in view: but, being addressed to men of every degree, it was highly proper that the language should be fitted to every capacity, and suited to their common modes of conception. They speak of *the foundations of the earth, the ends of the earth, the greater and lesser lights* in the heavens, the sun *rising, standing still, and going down*, and many other things in the same way. If deists object to these modes of speaking, as conveying ideas which are inconsistent with the true theory of the heavens and the earth, let them, if they can, substitute others which are consistent: let them, in their common conversation, when describing the revolutions of evening and morning, speak of the earth as rising and going down, instead of the sun; and the same with regard to the revolutions of the planets; and see if men, in common, will better understand them, or whether they would be able even to understand one another. The popular ideas on these subjects are as much "worked up" in the common conversation of philosophers, as they are in the scriptures: and the constant use of such language, even by philosophers themselves, in common conversation, sufficiently proves the futility and unfairness of their objecting to revelation on this account.

By the drift of Mr. Paine's writing, he seems to wish to convey the idea, that so contracted were the views of the scriptural writers, that even the *globularity* of the earth was unknown to them.

If, however, such a sentence as that of Job, *He hangeth the earth upon nothing,** had been found in any of the old heathen writers, he would readily have concluded that "this idea was familiar to the ancients." Or if a heathen poet had uttered such language as that of Isaiah, *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing: All nations before* HIM *are as nothing; and they are counted to* HIM *less than nothing and vanity*:— he might have been applauded as possessing a mind as large, and nearly as well informed, as the geniuses of modern times. But the truth is, the scriptural writers were not intent on displaying the greatness of their own conceptions, nor even of creation itself; but rather of the glory of HIM *who filleth all in all.*

The foregoing observations may suffice to remove Mr. Paine's objection; but, if in addition to them, it can be proved, that upon the supposition of a great number of inhabited worlds, Christianity, instead of appearing "little and ridiculous," is the more enlarged, and that some of its difficulties are more easily accounted for, this will be still more satisfactory. Let us therefore proceed, Secondly, to offer evidence that THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION IS STRENGTHENED AND AGGRANDIZED BY THE SUPPOSED MAGNITUDE OF CREATION.

1. *The Scripture teaches that God's regard to man is an astonishing instance of condescension, and that on account of the disparity between him and the celestial creation.*—"*When I consider thy heavens,*" saith David, "*the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the son of man that thou visiteth him?*" "*Will God in very deed,*" says Solomon, "*dwell with men upon the earth?*"†

* Chap. xxvi. 7.

† Psa. viii. 3, 4. 2 Chron. vi. 18. In this part of the subject considerable use is made of the scriptures; but it is only for the purpose of ascertaining what the Christian doctrine of redemption is: and this is undoubtedly consistent with every rule of just reasoning, as whether they be true or false, they are the standard by which this doctrine is to be measured.

The divine condescension towards man is a truth upon any system; but upon the supposition of the heavenly bodies being so many inhabited worlds, it is a truth full of amazement, and the foregoing language of David and Solomon is forcible beyond all conception. The idea of HIM who *upholds* a universe of such extent *by the word of his power* becoming incarnate, residing with men, and setting up his kingdom among them, that he might raise them to eternal glory, as much surpasses all philosophy calls great and noble, as the Creator supasses the work of his hands.

2. *The scriptures inform us, that before creation was begun, our world was marked out by eternal wisdom, as the theatre of its joyful operations.* This idea is forcibly expressed in the eighth chapter of Proverbs: *Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.*

On this interesting passage I shall offer a few remarks. First: Among the variety of objects which are here specified as the works of God, *the earth* is mentioned as being, in a sort, his peculiar property. Doubtless the whole creation is the Lord's; but none of his other works are here claimed as his own, in the manner that the earth is. It is called *his* earth. And this seems to intimate a design of rendering it the grand theatre on which his greatest work should be performed; a work that should fill all creation with joy and wonder. Secondly: The wisdom of God is described as *rejoicing* in the contemplation of this part of the creation. Whether *wisdom* in this passage be understood of the promised Messiah, or of a divine attribute personified, it makes no difference as to the argument. Allow it to mean the latter; and that the rejoicing of wisdom is a figurative mode of speaking, like

that of *mercy rejoicing against judgment*:* still, redemption by Jesus Christ is the object concerning which it was exercised: nothing less can be intimated than this, that the earth was the place marked out by Eternal Wisdom as the theatre of its joyful operations. Thirdly: The *habitable part* of the earth was more especially the object of Wisdom's joyful contemplation. The abodes of men, which through sin had become scenes of abomination, were, by the interposition of the Mediator, to become the abodes of righteousness. Here the serpent's head was to be bruised, his schemes confounded, and his works destroyed: and that by the *woman's seed*, the human nature, which he had despised and degraded. Here a trophy was to be raised in glory of sovereign grace, and millions of souls, delivered from everlasting destruction, were to present an offering of praise to HIM *that loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood.* Here, in a word, the peculiar glory of the Godhead was to be displayed in such a manner as to afford a lesson of joyful amazement to the whole creation, *throughout all ages* of time, yea, *world without end!*† Lastly: Not only were the abodes of man contemplated with *rejoicing*, but the *sons of men* themselves regarded with *delight.* The operations of Eternal Wisdom were directed to their salvation: and their salvation was appointed to become, in return, a mirror in which the whole creation should behold the operations of Eternal Wisdom. This expressive passage contains a fullness of meaning, let the extent of the intelligent creation be what it may: but if it be of that extent which modern philosophy supposes, it contains a greater fullness still. It perfectly accords with all those ideas suggested of this earth being the chosen theatre, upon which events should be brought to pass that shall fill creation with everlasting joy; and well they may, if the prospect of them rejoiced even the heart of God.

3. *The mediation of Christ is represented, in scripture, as bringing the whole creation into union with the church or people of God.* In the dispensation of the fullness of times, it is said that God would *gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in*

* James ii. 13. † Ephes. iii. 21.

*heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.** Again; *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether things in heaven.*†

The language here used, supposes that the introduction of sin has effected a disunion between men and the other parts of God's creation. It is natural to suppose it should be so. If a province of a great empire rise up in rebellion against the lawful government, all communication between the inhabitants of such provinces, and the faithful adherents to order and obedience, must be at an end. A line of separation would be immediateiy drawn by the sovereign, and all intercourse between the one and the other prohibited. Nor would it less accord with the inclination than with the duty of all the friends of righteousness to withdraw their counexion from those who were in rebellion against the supreme authority, and the general good. It must have been thus with regard to the holy angels, on man's apostacy. Those who at the creation of our world had *sung together*, and even *shouted for joy*, would now retire in disgust and holy indignation.

But, through the mediation of Christ, a re-union is effected. By the blood of the cross we have peace with God; and, being reconciled to him, are united to all who love him throughout the whole extent of creation. If Paul could address the Corinthians, concerning one of their excluded members, who had been brought to repentance, *To whom ye forgive any thing, I also;* much more would the friends of righteousness say in their addresses to the great Supreme, concerning an excluded member from the moral system, *To whom* THOU *forgivest any thing, we also!* Hence angels acknowledge Christians as *brethren*, and become ministering spirits to them while inhabitants of the present world.‡

There is another consideration which must tend to cement the holy part of God's creation to the church; which is, their being *all united under one head.* A central point of union has a great effect in cementing mankind. We see this every day in people who sit under the same ministry, or serve under the same com-

* Ephes. i. 10. † Col. i. 19, 20. ‡ Rev. xix. 10. Heb. i. 14.

mander, or are subjects of the same prince: whether minister, general, or prince, if they *love* him, they will be, more or less, united together under him.

Now, it is a part of the reward of our Redeemer, for his great humiliation, that he should be exalted as head over the whole creation of God. *Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exhalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, of heavenly beings, of earthly, and of those *under the earth.—He is the head of all principality and power.—God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and put all things under his feet; and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.**

These passages, it is true, represent the dominion of Christ as extending over the whole creation, enemies as well as friends, and things as well as persons. But if the very enemies of God are caused to subserve the purposes of redemption, much more his friends; what the others do by constraint, these do willingly; and the consideration of their having *one head*, must make them feel, as it were, nearer akin. And, as Christ is *head over all things to the church, which is his body*, it is hereby intimated, that the happiness of the church is by these means abundantly enlarged.

To what extent creation reaches, I do not pretend to know: be that however what it may, the foregoing passages teach us to consider the influence of redemption as commensurate with it; and in proportion to the magnitude of the one, such must be the influence of the other, as to the accomplishment of re-union and the restoration of happiness.

4. *Through the mediation of Christ, not only is the whole creation represented as augmenting the blessedness of the church; but the church as augmenting the blessedness of the whole creation.* As one

* Phil. ii. 8—10. Col. ii. 10. Ephes. i. 20—22.

member, be it ever so small, cannot suffer without the whole body, in some degree, suffering with it; so if we consider our world as a member of the great body or system of being, it might naturally be supposed that the ill or well-being of the former would, in some measure, effect the happiness of the latter. The fall of a planet from its orbit in the solar system, would probably have a less effect upon the other planets, than that of man from the moral system upon the other parts of God's intelligent creation. And, when it is considered, that man is a member of the body, *distinguished* by sovereign favour, as possessing a nature which the Son of God delighted to honour, by taking it upon him-himself, the interest which the universe at large may have in his fall and recovery may be greatly augmented. The leprosy of *Miriam* was an event that affected the whole camp of Israel; nor did they proceed on their journeys till she was restored to her situation: and it is not unnatural to suppose, that something analogous to this would be the effect of the fall and recovery of man on the whole creation.

The happiness of the redeemed is not the ultimate end of redemption; nor the only happiness which will be produced by it. God is represented in the scriptures as conferring his favours in such a way as that no creature shall be blessed *merely for his own sake*, but that he might communicate his blessedness to others. With whatever powers, talents, or advantages we are endued, it is not merely for our gratification, but that we may contribute to the general good. God gives discernment to the eye, speech to the tongue, strength to the arm, and agility to the feet; not for the gratification of these members, but for the accommodation of the body. It is the same in other things. God *blessed* Abraham; and wherefore? That he might *be a blessing*. He blessed his posterity after him; and for what purpose? That *in them all the nations of the earth might be blessed.** Though Israel was a nation *chosen* and *beloved* of God; yet it was not for their righteousness, nor merely with a view to their happiness that they were thus distinguished: but that he *might perform the oath which*

* Gen. xii. 2. xxii. 18.

*he sware unto their fathers:** the substance of which was, that the true religion should prosper among them, and be communicated by them to all other nations. The ungodly part of the Jewish nation viewed things, it is true, in a different light: they valued themselves as the favourites of heaven, and looked down upon other nations with contemptuous dislike. But it was otherwise with the godly: they entered into the spirit of the promise made to their fathers. Hence they prayed that *God would be merciful to them, and bless them, and cause his face to shine upon them;* to the end THAT HIS WAY MIGHT BE KNOWN UPON EARTH, AND HIS SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS.†

The same spirit was manifested by the apostles and primitive Christians. They perceived that all that rich measure of gifts and graces by which they were distinguished, was given them with the design of their communicating it to others; and this was their constant aim. Paul felt himself a *debtor* both to Jews and Greeks, and spent his life in diffusing the blessings of the gospel, though in return he was continually treated as an evil doer; and the same might be said of the other apostles.

Nor is this social principle confined to the present life. According to scripture representations, the happiness of saints in glory will be conferred on them, not that it might stop there, but be communicated to the whole moral system. The redemption of the church has already added to the blessedness of other holy intelligences. It has furnished a new medium by which the glory of the divine perfections is beheld and admired. To explore the wisdom of God in his works is the constant employment of holy angels, and that in which consists a large proportion of their felicity. Prior to the accomplishment of the work of redemption they contemplated the divine character through the medium of creation and providence; but NOW *unto principalities and powers, in heavenly places, is known,* BY THE CHURCH, *the manifold wisdom of God.*‡ And so much does this last display of divine glory exceed all that have gone before it, that those who have once obtained a view of it through this medium, will certainly prefer it to every other:

* Deut. ix. 5. vii. 7, 8. † Psa. lxvii. ‡ Ephes. iii. 10.

*Which things the angels desire to look into.** They do not, however, become indifferent to any of the divine operations: creation and providence continue to attract their attention, and are abundantly more interesting: they now study them according to the order in which they exist in the divine mind, that is, in subserviency to redemption.†

But that which is already accomplished is but small in comparison of what is in reserve. At the final judgment, when all the faithful will be collected together, they will become a medium through which the Lord Jesus will be *glorified* and *admired* by the whole creation: *He shall come to be glorified* IN *his saints; and to be admired* IN *all them that believe—in that day.*‡ It is a truth that the saints of God will themselves glorify and admire their great deliverer, but not the truth of this passage; the design of which is to represent them as a medium through which he shall be glorified by all the friends of God in the universe. The great physician will appear with his recovered millions; every one of whom will afford evidence of his disinterested love, and efficacious blood, to the whole admiring creation.

Much the same ideas are conveyed to us by those representations in which the whole creation are either called upon to rejoice on account of our redemption, or described as actually rejoicing and praising the Redeemer. Thus David, having spoken of God's mercy which was from everlasting to everlasting towards the children of men, addresses ALL HIS WORKS, IN ALL PLACES OF HIS DOMINION, *to bless his name.*§ John also informs us saying, *I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power,*

* 1 Pet. i. 12. † Col. i. 16, by him, and for him. ‡ 2 Thes. i. 10.

§ Psa. ciii. 17—22.

*be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.**

The phraseology of these passages is such, that no one can reasonably doubt whether the writers intended to express the whole upright intelligent creation, be it of what extent it may: and if it be of that extent which philosophy supposes, the greater must be the influence and importance of the work of redemption.

5. *The scriptures give us to expect that the earth itself, as well as its redeemed inhabitants, shall at a future period be purified, and reunited to the holy empire of God.*—We are taught to pray, and consequently to hope, that when *the kingdom of God* shall universally prevail, *his will shall be done on earth as it is* now *in heaven:*† but if so, earth itself must become, as it were, a part of heaven.

That we may form a clear and comprehensive view of our Lord's words, and of this part of the subject, be it observed, that the scriptures sometimes distinguish between *the kingdom of God*, and *that of Christ*. Though the object of both be the triumph of truth and righteousness, yet the mode of administration is different. The one is natural, the other delegated: the latter is in subserviency to the former, and shall be finally succeeded by it. Christ is represented as acting in our world by delegation: as if a king had commissioned his son to go and reduce a certain rebellious province, and restore it to his dominion. The period allotted for this work extends from the time of the revelation of the promised seed to the day of judgment. The operations are *progressive*. If it had seemed good in his sight, he could have overturned the power of Satan in a short period; but his wisdom saw fit to accomplish it by degrees. Like the commander of an invading army, he first takes possession of one post, then of another, then of a third, and so on, till by and by the whole country falls into his hands. And as the progress of a conqueror would be more rapid after a few of the strongest fortresses had surrendered, inasmuch as things would then approach fast to a crisis, to a breaking up, as it were, of the powers of the enemy,) so it has been

* Rev. v. 11—13. † Matt. vi. 10.

with the kingdom of Christ, and such will be its progress before the end of time. In the early ages of the world but little was done. At one time true religion appears to have existed only in a few families. Afterwards it assumed a national appearance. After this it was addressed to *all nations*. And before the close of time all nations shall be subjected to the obedience of Christ. This shall be the *breaking up* of Satan's empire. Now as on the conquest of a rebellious province, the delegated authority of the conqueror would cease, and the natural government of the empire resume its original form; so Christ is represented as *delivering up the kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all.** This is the ultimatum of the Messiah's kingdom; and this appears to be the ultimate object for which he taught his disciples to pray: but as the final end involves the preceding gradations which lead on to its accomplishment, in directing them to pray for the coming of God's kingdom, he directeth them to pray for the present prevalence of his own.

As on the conquest of a rebellious province some would be pardoned, and others punished; as every vestige of rebellion would be effaced, and law, peace, and order, flow in their ancient channels; such a period might with propriety be termed *a restitution of all things.*† Such will be the event of the last judgment, which is described as the concluding exercise of the delegated authority of Christ.

As on the conquest of a rebellious province, and the restitution of peace and order, that province, instead of being any longer separate from the rest of the empire, would become a component part of it, and the king's will would be done in it as it had been done without interruption in the loyal part of his territories; such is the representation given with respect to our world, and the holy parts of God's dominions. A period will arrive when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is now done in heaven. This, however, will never be the case while any vestige of moral evil remains. It must be after the general conflagration; which, though it will destroy every kind of evil, root and branch, that now prevails upon the face of the earth, and will terminate the generations of Adam, who have possessed it; yet will not so destroy the

* 1 Cor. xv. 24. 28. † Acts iii. 10.

earth itself but that it shall survive its fiery trial, and, as I apprehend, become the everlasting abode of righteousness; a part of the holy empire of God. This was to be the mark on which the disciples were to keep their eye in all their prayers: but as in desiring a *perfect* conformity to Christ in their own souls, they would necessarily desire the present progress of purity in the use of all the appointed means, so in praying that God's will might be *perfectly* done on earth, even as it is done in heaven, they would pray for the progressive prevalence of righteousness in the world, as that by which it should be accomplished.

It is not improbable that the earth, thus purified, may ever continue the resort, if not the frequent abode of those who are redeemed from it. Places where some of the most interesting events have been transacted, when visited at some distance of time, often become, in the present state of things, a considerable source of delight. Such was Bethel to Jacob, and Tabor, no doubt, to the three disciples; and if any remains of our present sensations should attend us in a state of immortality, a review of the scenes of our Lord's birth, life, agony, and crucifixion, as well as of many other events, may furnish a source of everlasting enjoyment.

However this may be, the scriptures give us to understand, that though *the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up;* yet *according to promise*, we are to *look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.** By the *new heavens* here is plainly to be understood so much of the element as shall have been affected by the general conflagration; and by the *new earth*, the earth after it is purified by it.

Much to the same purpose is the account given towards the close of the Revelation of John. After a description of the general judgment, it follows, *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.—And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* When the earth shall have become a part of God's holy empire, heaven

* 2 Pet. iii. 12, 13.

itself may then be said to come down upon it: seeing all that is now ascribed to the one will be true of the other. *Behold, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them; and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them; and shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things shall be passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said to me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.**

If the great end of redemption be the reunion of this world to the holy empire of God, and if such reunion be accompanied with a mutual augmentation of blessedness; then the importance of the one must bear some proportion to the magnitude of the other. Upon any system of philosophy, redemption is great; but upon that which so amazingly magnifies intelligent creation, it must be great beyond expression.

6. *The scriptures represent the punishment of the finally impenitent as appointed for an example to the rest of the creation.—Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth* FOR AN EXAMPLE, *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.—And her smoke* (the smoke of Babylon,) *rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.*†

The miseries of the damned are never represented as inflicted upon them from such a kind of wrath or vengeance as bears no relation to the general good. *God is love*; and in none of his proceedings does he violate this principle, or lose sight of the well being of creation in general. The manifestation of his glory is not only inseparably connected with this object, but consists in accomplishing it.

It is necessary for the general good that God's abhorrence of moral evil should be marked by some strong and durable expres-

* Rev. xxi. 1—5. † Rev. xix. 3, 4.

sion of it; so that no one subject of his empire can overlook it. Such an expression was the death of Christ, his only-begotten Son; and this availeth on behalf of all who acquiesce in his salvation: but all who do not, or who possess not such a temper of heart as would acquiesce in it if it were presented to them, must themselves be made sacrifices to his justice; and so, like enemies and traitors to a human government, must be made to answer such an end by their death as shall counteract the ill example afforded by their life. What is said of the barren vine is applicable to the finally impenitent: *It is not fit for any work—it is good for nothing but to be burned!** The only way in which they promote the general good is by their overthrow: like the censors of Korah and his company which were made into *broad plates for a covering to the altar; that they might be a sign to the children of Israel* in future generations;† or like Lot's wife, who was converted into a *pillar of salt*, or a lasting monument of divine displeasure!

If the grand end of future punishment be *example*, this must suppose the existence of an intelligent creation, who shall profit by it; and it should seem of a creation of magnitude; as it accords with the conduct of neither God nor man to punish a great number for an example to a few.

This truth affords a satisfactory idea of the divine government, whether there be a multiplicity of inhabited worlds or not: but if there be, it is still more satisfactory; as on this supposition the number of those who shall be finally lost may bear far less proportion to the whole of the intelligent creation, than a single execution to the inhabitants of a great empire. It is true, the loss to those who are lost will be nothing abated by this consideration; perhaps, on the contrary, it may be augmented; and to them the divine government will ever appear gloomy; but to those who judge of things impartially, and upon an extensive scale, it will appear to contain no more of a disparagement to the government of the universe, than the execution of a murderer, once in a hundred years, would be to the goverment of a nation.

And now I appeal to the intelligent, the serious, and the candid reader, whether there be any truth in what Mr. Paine asserts, that

* Ezek. xv. 2—5. † Numb. xvi. 38.

to admit "that God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the Christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air." On the contrary, it might be proved, that every system of philosophy is little in comparison of Christianity. Philosophy may expand our ideas of creation; but it neither inspires a love to the moral character of the Creator, nor a well-grounded hope of eternal life. Philosophy at most can only place us at the top of Pisgah: there, like Moses we must die: it gives us no possessions of the good land. It is the province of Christianity to add, ALL IS YOURS! When you have ascended to the height of human discovery, there are things, and things of infinite moment too, that are utterly beyond its reach. Revelation is the medium, and the only medium, by which, standing, as it were, "on nature's Alps," we discover things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and of which it never hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

CONCLUDING ADDRESSES,

TO

DEISTS, JEWS, AND CHRISTIANS.

Whether the writer of these sheets can justly hope that what he advances will attract the attention of unbelievers, he does not pretend to say. If however, it should fall into the hands of individuals among them, he earnestly entreats that, for their own sakes, they would attend to what follows with seriousness.

TO DEISTS.

Fellow Men,

It is hoped that nothing in the preceding pages can be fairly construed into the want of good will towards any of you. If I know my heart, it is not you, but your mischievous principles that are the objects of my dislike.

In the former part of this performance, I have endeavoured to prove, that the system which you embrace overlooks the moral character of God, refuses to worship him, affords no standard of right and wrong, undermines the most efficacious motives to virtuous action, actually produces a torrent of vice, and leaves mankind, under all their miseries, to perish without hope; in fine, that it is an immoral system, pregnant with destruction to the human race. Unless you be able to overlook what is there advanced, or, at least, be conscious that it is not true with regard to

yourselves, you have reason to be seriously alarmed. To embrace a system of immorality is the same thing as to be enemies to all righteousness; neither to fear God, nor regard man; and what good fruit you can expect to reap from it, in this world or another, it is difficult to conceive. But alas, instead of being alarmed at the immorality of your principles, is there no reason to suspect that it is on this very account you cherish them? You can occasionally praise the morality of Jesus Christ: but are you sincere? Why then do you not walk by it? However you may magnify other difficulties, which you have industriously laboured to discover in the bible, your actions declare that it is the holiness of its doctrines and precepts, that more than any thing else offends you. The manifest object at which you aim, both for yourselves and the world, is an exemption from its restraints. Your general conduct, if put into words, amounts to this: *Come let us break his bands, and cast away his cords from us.*

Circumstances of late years have much favoured your design. Your party has gained the ascendency in a great nation, and has been consequently increasing in other nations. Hence it is, perhaps, that your spirits are raised, and that a higher tone is assumed in your speeches and writings than has been usual on former occasions. You are *great*, you are *enlightened;* yes, you have found out the secret, and have only to rid the world of Christianity in order to render it happy. But be not too confident. You are not the first who have set themselves against the Lord, and against his Anointed. You have have overthrown superstition; but vaunt not against Christianity. Of a truth you have destroyed the gods of Rome, for they were no gods; but let this suffice you. It is hard to kick against the pricks.

Whatever success may attend your cause, if it be an immoral one, and espoused *on that very account*, it cannot possibly stand. It must fall, and you may expect to be buried in its ruins. It may be thought sufficient for me to reason on the system itself, without descending to the *motives* of those who imbibe it; but where motives are manifested by actions, they become objects of human cognizance. Nor is there any hope of your unbelief being removed, but by something that shall reach the *cause* of it. My desire

is neither to insult nor flatter, but seriously to expostulate with you; if God peradventure may give you repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. Three things, in particular, I would earnestly recommend to your serious consideration. How it was that you first imbibed your present principles; How it is that almost all your writers, at one time or other, bear testimony in favour of Christianity; and, How it comes to pass that your principles fail you, as they are frequently known to do, in a dying hour?

First: How was it that you first renounced Christianity, and imbibed your present principles? Retrace the process of your minds, and ask your consciences as you proceed, whether all was fair and upright. Nothing is more common than for persons of relaxed morals to attribute their change of conduct to a change of sentiments, or views relative to those subjects. It is galling to one's own feelings, and mean in the account of others, to *act against principle;* but if a person can once persuade himself to think favourably of those things which he has formerly accounted sinful, and can furnish a plea for them, which, at least, may serve to parry the censures of mankind, he will feel much more at ease, and be able to put on a better face when he mingles in society. Whatever inward stings may annoy his peace under certain occasional qualms, yet he has not to reproach himself, nor can any one reproach him with that inconsistency of character as in former instances. Rousseau confesses he found, in the reasonings of a certain lady, with whom he lived in the greatest possible familiarity, all those ideas *which he had occasion for:*—Have you not found the same in the conversation and writings of Deists? Did you not, previously to your rejection of Christianity, indulge in vicious courses; and while indulging in these courses, did not its holy precepts, and awful threatenings gall your spirits? Were you not like persons gathering forbidden fruit amidst showers of arrows: and had you not recourse to your present principles for a shield against them? If you cannot honestly answer these questions in the negative, you are in an evil cause. You may flatter yourselves, for a while, that perhaps there may be no hereafter, or at least no judgment to come; but you know the time is not far

distant when you must go and see; and then, if you should be mistaken, What will you do?

Many of you have descended from godly parents, and have had a religious education. Has not your infidelity arisen from the dislike which you conceived in early life to religious exercises? Family worship was a weariness to you; and the cautions, warnings and counsels which were given you, instead of having any proper effect, only irritated your corruptions. You longed to be from under the yoke. Since that time, your parents, it may be, have been removed by death; or if they live, they may have lost their control over you. So now you are free. But still something is wanting to erase the *prejudices* of education, which, in spite of all your efforts, will accompany you, and embitter your present pursuits. For this purpose, a friend put into your hands *The Age of Reason*, or some production of the kind. You read it with avidity. This is the very thing you wanted. You have long suspected the truth of Christianity; but had not courage to oppose it. Now then, you are a philosopher; yes, a philosopher! 'Our fathers,' say you, 'might be well-meaning people, but they were imposed upon by priests. The world gets more *enlightened* now-a-days. There is no need of such rigidness. The Supreme Being (if there be one,) can never have created the pleasures of life, but for the purpose of enjoyment. Avaunt, ye self-denying casuists! Nature is the law of man!'

Was not this, or something nearly resembling it, the process of your minds? And are you now satisfied? I do not ask whether you have been able to defend your cause against assailants, nor whether you have gained converts to your way of thinking: you may have done both; but are you satisfied with yourselves? Do you really believe yourselves to be in the right way? Have you no misgivings of heart? Is there not something within you which occasionally whispers, 'My parents were righteous, and I am wicked: O that my soul were in their souls' stead?'

Ah young men! If such be the occasional revoltings of your mind, what are you doing in labouring to gain others over to your way of thinking? Can you from experience honestly promise them peace of mind? Can you go about to persuade them that there is

no hell, when, if you would speak the truth, you must acknowledge that you have already an earnest of it kindled in your bosoms? If counsels were not lost upon you, I would entreat you to be contented with destroying your own souls. Have pity on your fellow-creatures, if you have none upon yourselves? Nay, spare yourselves so much, at least, as not to incur the everlasting execrations of your most intimate acquaintance. If Christianity should prove what your consciences in your most serious moments tell you it is, you are doing this every day of your lives.

Secondly: Consider How it is that almost all your writers, at one time or other, bear testimony in favour of christianity. It were easy to collect from those very writings which were designed to undermine the Christian religion, hundreds of testimonies in its favour. Voltaire and Rousseau, as we have seen already, have in their fits gone far towards contradicting all which they have written against it. Bolingbroke has done the same. Such sentences as the following may be found in his publications: "Supposing Christianity to have been a human invention, it has been the most amiable invention that was ever imposed on mankind for their good.—Christianity as it came out of the hand of God, if I may use the expression, was a most simple and intelligible rule of belief, worship, and manners, which is the true notion of a religion.—The gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity."* Paine, perhaps, has said as little in this way as any of your writers, yet he has professed a respect for the character of Jesus Christ. "He was," says he, "a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind."†

In what manner will you go about to account for these concessions? Christian writers, those at least who are sincerely attached to the case, are not seized with these fits of inconsistency. How is it that yours, like the worshippers of Baal, should thus be continually cutting themselves with knives? You must either give up your leaders as a set of men, who, while they are labouring to

* Works, Vol. IV. pp. 394, 395. Vol. V. pp. 188, 189

† Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 5.

persuade the world of the hypocrisy of priests, were themselves the most infamous of all hypocrites; or, which will be equally fatal to your cause, you must attribute it to occasional convictions, which they felt and expressed, though contrary to the general strain of their writings. Is it not an unfavourable character of your cause, that in this particular, it exactly resembles that of vice itself? Vicious men will often bear testimony in favour of virtue, especially on the near approach of death; but virtuous men never return the compliment by bearing testimony in favour of vice. We are not afraid of Christians thus betraying their cause; but neither your writers nor your consciences are to be trusted in a serious hour.

Thirdly: Consider How it comes to pass that your principles fail you, as they are frequently known to do in a dying hour. It is a rule with wise men, *so to live as they shall wish they had when they come to die.* How do you suppose you shall wish you had lived in that day? Look at the deaths of your greatest men, and see what their principles have done for them at last. Mark the end of that apostle and high-priest of your profession, Voltaire; and try if you can find in it either integrity, or hope, or any thing that should render it an object of envy.* Why is it that so many of you faint in the day of trial? If your cause were good, you would defend it with uprightness, and die

* The following particulars, among many others, are recorded of this writer by his biographer, Condorcet, a man after his own heart. First: That he conceived the design of overturning the Christian religion, and that by his own hand. "I am wearied," said he, "of hearing it repeated that twelve men were sufficient to establish Christianity; and I wish to prove there needs but one to destroy it." Secondly: That in pursuit of this object he was threatened with a persecution, to avoid which he received the sacrament, and publicly declared his respect for the church, and his disdain of his detractors, namely those who had called in question his Christianity! Thirdly: That in his last illness, in Paris, being desirous of obtaining what is called Christian burial, he sent for a priest, to whom he declared that he "died in the Catholic faith, in which he was born." Fourthly: That another priest (Curate of the parish) troubled him with questions. Among other things he asked, "Do you believe the divinity of Jesus Christ?" "In the name of God, Sir," replied Voltaire, "speak to me no more of that man, but let me die in peace."

with inward satisfaction. But is it so? Mr. Paine flatters himself that his principles will bear him up in the prospect of death ;* and it is possible that he may brave it out in some such manner as David Hume did. Such instances, however, are rare. For one unbeliever that maintains his courage, many might be produced whose hearts have failed them, and who have trembled for the consequences of their infidelity.

On the other hand, you cannot produce a single instance of a Christian, WHO AT THE APPROACH OF DEATH WAS TROUBLED OR TERRIFIED IN HIS CONSCIENCE FOR HAVING BEEN A CHRISTIAN. Many have been afraid in that day lest their faith in Christ should not prove genuine ; but who that has put his trust in him was ever known to be apprehensive lest he should at last deceive him? Can you account for this difference ? If you have discovered the true religion, and ours be all fable and imposture, how comes it to pass that the issue of things is what it is? Do gold and silver and precious stones perish in the fire ? and do wood and hay and stubble endure it ?

I have admitted that Mr. Paine may possibly brave it out to the last ; but if he does, his courage *may be* merely assumed. Pride will induce men to disguise the genuine feelings of their hearts, on more occasions than one. We hear much of courage among duellists ; but little credit is due to what they say, if, while the words proceed from their lips, we see them approach each other with paleness and trembling. Yea more, If Mr. Paine's courage in death be not different from what it already is in the prospect of it, it *certainly will be* merely assumed. He has given full proof of what his courage amounts to in what he has advanced on the certainty of a future state. He acknowledges the possibility of a future judgment ; yea, he admits it to be rational to believe that there will be one. " The power," he says, " that called us into being, can, if he please and when he pleases, call us to account for the manner in which we have lived here ; and therefore, without seeking any further motive for the belief, it is rational to believe that he will, for we

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. *Preface*

know before-hand that he can."* I shall not stop to inquire into the justness of Mr. Paine's reasoning, from what God can do to what he will do; it is sufficient for me that he admits it to be "rational to believe that God will call men to account for the manner in which they have lived here." And can he admit this truth, and not tremble? Mark his firmness. After acknowledging that a future judgment is the object of rational *belief*, he retracts what he has said by reducing it to only a *probability*, which is to have the influence of belief: yea, and as if that were too terrible an idea, he brings it down to a mere *possibility*. The reason which he gives for these reductions is, that "If we knew it as a fact, we should be the mere *slaves of terror*." Indeed? But wherefore? Christians believe in a judgment to come, and they are not the slaves of terror. They have an *Advocate* as well as a Judge, by believing in whom the terror of judgment is removed. And though Mr. Paine rejects this ground of consolation, yet if things be as he has represented them, I do not perceive why he should be terrified. He writes as though he stood on a very respectable footing with his Creator; he is not "an out-cast, a beggar, or a worm;" he needs no mediator: no indeed! He "stands in the same relative condition with his Maker he ever did stand since man existed."† Very well; of what then is he afraid? "God is good, and will exceed the very best of us in goodness." On this ground Lord Shaftesbury assures us, "Deists can have no dread or suspicion to render them uneasy: for it is malice only, and not goodness, which can make them afraid."‡ Very well, I say again, of what then is Mr. Paine afraid? If a Being full of goodness will not hurt him, he will not be hurt. Why should he be terrified at a *certain* hereafter. Why not meet his Creator with cheerfulness and confidence? Instead of this, he knows of no method by which he may be exempted from *terror* but that of reducing future judgment to a mere *possibility;* leaving room for some faint hope, at least, that what he professes to believe as true, may, in the end, prove false. Such is the courage of your blustering hero. Un-

* Age of Reason, *Part* II. p. 100. † Age of Reason, *Part* I. p. 21.

‡ Characteristics, Vol. I. § 5.

happy man; unhappy people! Your principles will not support you in death, nor so much as in the contemplation of an hereafter.

Let Mr. Paine's hypothesis be admitted, and that in its lowest form, that there is only a *possibility* of a judgment to come, this is sufficient to evince your folly, and, if you thought on the subject, to destroy your peace. This alone has induced many of you in your last moments to wish you had lived like Christians. If it be possible that there may be a judgment to come, why should it not be equally possible that Christianity itself may be true? And if it should, on what ground do you stand? If it be otherwise, Christians have nothing to fear. While they are taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, whatever may prove true with respect to another, it is presumed they are safe: but if that Saviour whom you have despised should be indeed the Son of God: if that name which you have blasphemed should be the only one given under heaven and among men by which you can be saved; what a situation must you be in! You may wish at present not to be told of him; yea, even in death it may be a vexation, as it was to Voltaire, to hear of him; but hear of him you must, and, what is more, you must appear before him.

I cannot conclude this address without expressing my earnest desire for your salvation; and, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, reminding you that our Redeemer is merciful. He can have compassion on the ignorant, and them who are out of the way. The door of mercy is not yet shut. At present you are invited and even entreated to enter in. But if you still continue hardened against him, you may find to your cost that the abuse of mercy gives an edge to justice; and that to be crushed to atoms by falling rocks, or buried in oblivion at the bottom of mountains, were rather to be chosen than an exposure to the wrath of the Lamb.

TO THE JEWS.

Beloved for the fathers' sakes!

He whom you have long rejected, looked upon Jerusalem and wept over it. With tears he pronounced upon that famous city a doom, which, according to your own writer, Josephus, was soon afterwards accomplished. In imitation of our Lord and Saviour we also could weep over your present situation. There are thousands in Britain, as well as in other nations, whose daily prayer is, that you may be saved. Hear me patiently, and candidly. Your present and everlasting good is the object of my desire.

It is not my design, in this brief address, to go over the various topics in dispute between us. Many have engaged in this work, and I hope to some good purpose. The late addresses to you, both from the pulpit and the press, as they were dictated by pure benevolence, certainly deserve, and I trust have gained, in some degree, your candid attention. All that I shall say will be comprised in a few suggestions, which I suppose to arise from the subject of the preceding pages.

You have long sojourned among men who have been called Christians. You have seen much evil in them, and they have seen much in you. The history of your own nation, and that of every other, confirms one of the leading doctrines of both your and our scriptures—*the depravity of human nature.* But, in your commerce with mankind, you must have had opportunity of distinguishing between nominal and serious Christians. Great numbers in your nation, even in its best days, were wicked men; and great numbers in every nation, at present are the same. But cannot you perceive a people scattered through various denominations of Christians, who fear God and regard man; who instead of treating you with a haughty contempt, as being strangers scattered among the nations, discover a tender regard toward you on that very account; who, while they are grieved for the hardness of

your hearts, and hurt at your scornful rejection of Him whom their soul loveth, are nevertheless ardently desirous of your salvation? Are you not acquainted with Christians, whose utmost revenge, if they could have their will of you, for all your hard speeches, would be to be instrumental in turning you from what they believe to be the power of Satan, unto God?

Let me farther appeal to you, Whether Christians of this description be not the true children of Abraham, the true successors of your patriarchs and prophets, rather than those of an opposite spirit, though literally descended from their loins. You must be aware, that even in the times of David, a genuine Israelite was *a man of a pure heart;* and in the times of the prophets, apostate Israelites were accounted as *Ethiopians.** Your ancestors were men of whom the world was not worthy: but where will you now look for such characters among you as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as Samuel, David, Hezekiah and Josiah; as Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and many others? While you garnish their sepulchres, have you not manifestly lost their spirit; This is a fact that ought to alarm you, and lead you seriously to examine whether you have not forsaken their faith. There is one thing which has particularly struck my mind, and which I would earnestly recommend to your consideration; namely, *the temper of modern Infidels toward your fathers, toward you, and toward us.*

You need not be told that deistical writers invariably treat your fathers with scorn and dislike. Just as Appion and other Greek writers poured contempt upon your nation; just as the more ancient *Moabites* reproached, and *proudly magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of Hosts;*† so do all our modern Infidels. But from the time that your fathers rejected Him in whom we believe as the Lord Messiah, though you have been exposed to the chastisements of heaven, and to much injurious treatment from pretended Christians; yet Deists, the common enemies of revelation, have been, comparatively speaking, reconciled to you. So, however, it appears to me. I do not recollect to have met with a single reflection upon you in any of their writings. On the con-

* Psa. lxxiii. 2. Amos ix. 7. † Zeph ii. 10

trary, they seem to feel themselves near akin to you. Your enmity to Jesus seems to be the price of their forgiveness: like Herod and Pontius Pilate, you became friends in the day of his crucifixion. Mr. Paine, though his writings abound in sneers against your nation, *prior* to its rejection of Christ, yet appears to be well reconciled to *you*, and willing to admit your lame account of the body of Jesus being stolen away.* Ought you not to be alarmed at these things? Seriously examine whether you have not forsaken the God of your fathers, and become the friends and allies of men who hate both Him and them.

The hatred of Infidels has long been transferred from you to us. Whether, in the language of the New Testament, we be the true *children of Abraham*, or not, we inherit that reproach and dislike from unbelievers which was heretofore the portion of the godly Israelites. On what account were your fathers hated by the practical atheists of their day? Was it not because of their *devotedness to God?* It was this in David that provoked the resentment of the children of Belial, and rendered them his determined enemies. They were continually jeering at his *prayers*, his *tears*, and his *trust* in Jehovah; turning that which in reality was his *glory into shame*; and afflicting him in his affliction, by scornfully inquiring, *Where is thy God?*† Such is the treatment which the *godly* part of your nation received in all ages, both from heathens abroad and impious characters at home;‡ and such is the treatment which serious Christians continue to receive from ungodly men to this day; but are you hated and reproached *on this account?*

Of late years it has been frequently pleaded, that the principal objections to your embracing the Christian religion, are found in the doctrines of the trinity, the deity of Christ, and atonement by his death; doctrines which the greater part of Christians hold to be taught in the New Testament. But those who impute your conduct to these causes, must have nearly as mean an opinion of

* Age of Reason. *Part* I. pp. 6, 7.

† Psa. xxii. 8. iv. 2. xlii. 3. xxix. 18. xl. 15.

‡ Psa. lxix. 10. cxv. 2. Joel ii. 17. Micah. vii. 8—10. Isa. lxvi. 5.

your rationality, as they have of ours; with whom, they say, "there is no reasoning; and that we are to be pitied, and considered as under a debility of mind in one respect, however sensible and rational in others."* What have the principles, which in our judgment are taught in the New Testament, to do with your acknowledging Jesus to be the Messiah, and the Christian religion to be of God? Let these positions be admitted, and examine the New Testament for yourselves. If you were not considered as possessing a sufficient degree of good sense to distinguish between Christianity and the creed of any particular party of Christians, it is surprising that *rational Christians* should think of writing addresses to you. For our parts, we could almost be satisfied that you should decide the controversy, whether the doctrines beforementioned be taught in the New Testament, or not? As to removing these stumbling-blocks, as some call them, out of your way, we have no inclination to attempt it. Only imbibe the spirit of your ancestors, and they will presently cease to be stumbling-blocks. Believe Moses, and you will believe Jesus; and believing Jesus, neither his claiming to be the *Son of God*, and consequently *equal with God*, nor his insisting upon his *flesh being the life of the world*, will offend you. On the contrary, whenever the spirit of grace, and of supplication is poured out upon you, and you come to look on him whom you have pierced, and mourn, you will join in the worship of him; and the doctrine of atonement by his death will be to you a fountain set open for sin and for uncleanness.†

You live in expectation of being restored to your own land. We expect the same thing, and rejoice in the belief of it. The Old and the New Testament agree in predicting it.‡ But the same prophets that have foretold your return to Canaan, have also foretold that you must be brought to *repent of your sins, and to seek Jehovah your God, and David your king*.§ Your holy land will avail you but little, unless you be a holy people.

* Lindsey's Chatechists, Inquiry 6. † Zech. xiii. 10—14. xiii. 1

‡ Ezek. xxxvi. Luke xxi. 24. § Hos. iii. 6

Finally : You admit, I suppose, that though we should err in believing Jesus to be the Messiah ; yet, while we deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ; it is an error that may not affect our eternal salvation : but if the error be on your side, on what ground do you stand ? Your fathers, in this case, were murderers of the Prince of Life ; and by adopting their principles, you make the deed your own. His blood lies upon you, and upon your children. The terrible destruction of your city by the Romans, and the hardness of heart to which you have been given up, are symptoms of that wrath which is come upon you to the uttermost. Repent and believe the gospel, that you may escape the wrath to come !

TO CHRISTIANS.

Beloved Brethren !

It is witnessed of David, that he *served the will of God in his generation.* Every generation has its peculiar work. The present age is distinguished, you know by the progress of infidelity. We have long been exempted from persecution ; and he whose fan is in his hand, perceiving his floor to stand in need of purging, seems determined by new trials to purge it. The present is a winnowing time. If we wish to serve the will of God in it, we must carefully attend to those duties which such a state of things imposes upon us.

In the first place, Let us *look well to the sincerity of our hearts ; and see to it, that our Christianity is vital, practical, and decided.* An army called to engage after a long peace, requires to be examined, and every one should examine himself. Many become soldiers when danger is at a distance. The mighty host of Midianites were overcome by a select band. A proclamation was issued through the army of Israel, "Whosoever is fearful and afraid,

let him return :" and after a great diminution from cowardice, the rest must be brought down to the water to be tried. Such, or nearly such, may be the trials of the church : those who overcome, may be reduced to a small company in comparison of those who have borne the Christian name. So indeed the scriptures inform us. They that obtain the victory with Christ are *called, and chosen, and faithful.**

The manner in which things of late ages have moved on in the religious world, has been such as to admit of a large outer court, if I may so speak, for a sort of half-worshippers. A general religious reputation has been hitherto obtained at a small expense. But should infidelity prevail throughout Christendom, as it has in France, the nominal extent of the Christian church has been greatly reduced. In taking its dimensions, the outer-court will, as it were, be left out, and given to the Gentiles. In this case, you must come in or keep out ; be one thing or another ; a decided friend of Christ or an avowed Infidel. It is possible, that the time may come when all parties will be reduced, in effect, to two—*believers and unbelievers.*

" Never," says a late masterly and moving writer, " were times more eventful and critical, than at present ; never were appearances more singular and interesting in the political. or in the religious world. You behold on the one hand, infidelity with dreadful irruption, extending its ravages far and wide ; and on the other, an amassing accession of zeal and activity to the cause of Christianity. Error in all its forms is assiduously and successfully propagated ; but the progress of evangelical truth is also great. The number of the apparently neutral party daily diminishes ; and men are now either becoming worshippers of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, or receding fast through the mists of scepticism into the dreary regions of speculative and practical atheism. It seems as if Christianity and Infidelity were mustering each the hosts of the battle, and preparing for some great day of God. The enemy is come in like a flood : but the spirit of the Lord hath lifted up a standard against him. Who, then, is

* Rev. xvii. 14.

on the Lord's side ? Who ?—Let him come forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty !"*

Secondly: *Let a good understanding be cultivated among sincere Christians of different denominations.* Let the friends of Christ know one another; and let not slighter shades of difference keep them at variance. The enemies of Christianity know how to avail themselves of our discords. The union which is here recommended, however, is not a merely nominal one, much less one that requires a sacrifice of principle. Let us unite so far as we can act in concert, in promoting the interest of Christ; and hold ourselves open to conviction with regard to other things. Let not the free discussion of our differences be laid aside, or any such connexion formed as shall require it: only let them be conducted with modesty, frankness, and candour, and the godly will find their account in them. Let it be the great concern of all, not so much to maintain their own peculiarities, as to know and practice the truth; not so much to yield, and come nearer to other denominations, as to approximate towards the mind of Christ. *The mind of Christ*, as expressed in his doctrines and precepts, must be the central point in which we meet: as we approach this, we shall come nearer to each other. So much agreement as there is among us, so much is there of union, and so much agreement as there is in the mind of Christ, so much of Christian union.

Finally: *Let not the heart of any man fail him, on account of the high tone and scornful airs assumed by Infidels.* The reign of infidelity may be extensive, but it must be short. It carries in it the seeds of its own dissolution. Its immoralities are such, that the world cannot long sustain them. Scripture prophecy has clearly foretold all the great governments of the world, from the time of the Jewish Captivity to this day—the Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian and Roman; together with the ten kingdoms into which the last of these empires has been divided, and the Papal government which sprung up among them; but it makes no explicit mention of this. It has no individual subsistence given it in the system of prophecy. It is not a *beast*, but a mere putrid excrescence of the

* Ferrier's Two Discourses at Paisley, in June, 1798.

Papal beast; an excrescence which, though it may diffuse death through every vein of the body on which it grew, yet shall die along with it. *The beast*, and all which pertains to him, *goeth into perdition.** There is no space of time allowed for this government: no sooner is it said, *Babylon is fallen*, than voices are heard in heaven, declaring that *the marriage of the Lamb is come.* No sooner does *the judgment sit, to take away the dominion of the little horn, to consume and to destroy it unto the end*, than it follows, *And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.*†

Popery is not yet destroyed, though it has received a deadly blow; and from what is said of the little horn, that they shall take away his dominion, *to consume and to destroy it unto the end*, it should seem that its overthrow will be gradual. While this is accomplishing, the reign of infidelity may continue, with various success; but no longer. Only let us *watch and keep our garments clean*, (a caution given, it is probable, with immediate reference to the present times,) and we have nothing to fear. It is a source of great consolation that the last of the four beasts, which for more than two thousand years have persecuted the church, and oppressed mankind, is drawing near to its end. The government that shall next prevail will be that of Christ, *whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Even so, Amen. Blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen!*

* Rev. xvii. 8, 11.

† Dan. vii. 26, 27. The writer has since read a very able discourse by Mr. Nathan Strong, of Hartford, Connecticut, entitled, Political Instruction from the Prophecies of God's Word: in which the above sentiments are stated with great force and evidence.

AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE LATE

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TO INDIA:

PART THE FIRST.

COMPRISING AN ADDRESS TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY,

IN ANSWER TO

MR. TWINING;

AND

STRICTURES ON THE PREFACE OF A PAMPHLET,

BY

MAJOR SCOTT WARING.

There are no such things done as thou sayest; but thou feignest them out of thine own heart. NEHEMIAH.

And now, I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD. GAMALIEL.

TO

EDWARD PARRY, ESQ.

CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Sir,

AS in a Letter lately addressed to you by Mr. THOMAS TWINING, on the danger of interfering in the religious opinions of the natives of India, there is a reference to the labours of the Baptist Missionaries in that country, you will not consider me, I hope, as obtruding myself on your attention while I offer a few remarks upon it, and upon the important subject which it embraces.

It is true, the principal part of Mr. Twining's pamphlet is directed against *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and that this has been sufficiently answered from another quarter; but though he affects "not to know these Missionaries," yet their undertaking particularly in the work of translating the scriptures, has, no doubt, contributed to excite his alarm.

If by "interfering in the religious opinions of the natives of India," Mr. Twining means nothing more than the dissemination of the Christian faith by the fair methods of persuasion; the Baptist Missionaries, and those of every other denomination, must be acknowledged to have interfered; but if he include under that term, violence, unfair influence, or any measures subversive of free choice; or any addresses, either in speech or writing, which have endangered the peace of society, they have not interfered, nor have they any desire of so doing.

Whether Mr. Twining has chosen this ambiguous term, that he may with the greater ease insinuate, as occasion requires, the obnoxious idea of a design to overthrow the Pagan and Mahomedan religions by *force*, I shall not determine; but that such is the use that is made of it, throughout his pamphlet, is clear. "As long," he says, "as we continue to govern India in the mild and *tolerant* spirit of Christianity, we may govern it with ease; but if ever the fatal day shall arrive when religious innovation shall set her foot in that country, indignation will spread from one end of Hindostan to the other." (p. 30.) Is giving the scriptures, then, to the natives, in their own languages, and offering to instruct them in their leading doctrines, opposed to the mild and *tolerant spirit of Christianity?* If it be, Sir, neither the Founder of the Christian religion, nor his followers, have yet understood it. Be this as it may, it is not an "innovation:" the fatal day has arrived more than a century ago. Mr. Twining "hopes our native subjects in India will be *permitted* quietly to follow their own religious opinions." (p. 31.) We hope so too; but if this gentleman's wishes could be realized, we should not be permitted to follow ours, nor to recommend what we believe to be of eternal importance, to our fellow-men, and fellow-subjects. Yet this is all we desire. If Missionaries, or any other persons on their behalf, should so far forget the principles of the gospel, as to aim at any thing beyond it, I trust the government will always possess wisdom and justice sufficient to counteract them. The question, Sir, which Mr. Twining proposes to submit to a general court of proprietors, whatever be the terms in which it may be couched, will not be, whether the natives of India shall continue to enjoy the most perfect toleration; but, WHETHER THAT TOLERATION SHALL BE EXTENDED TO CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES?

I have observed, with pain, Sir, of late years, a notion of toleration entertained even by some who would be thought its firmest advocates, which tends not only to abridge, but to subvert it. They have no objection to Christians of any denomination enjoying their own opinions, and, it may be, their own worship; but they *must not be allowed to make proselytes.* Such appear to be the notions of Mr. Twining and his friends. They do not propose to

persecute the Christians of India, provided they would keep their Christianity to themselves; but those who *attempt to convert others*, are to be exterminated. Sir, I need not say to you, that this is not toleration, but persecution. Toleration is a legal permission not only to enjoy our own principles unmolested, but to make use of all the fair means of persuasion to recommend them to others. The former is but little more than might be enjoyed in countries the most distinguished by persecution; for few would wish to interrupt men, so long as they kept their religion to themselves. Yet this is the whole of what some would wish to allow, both in the East and West Indies. In former times, unbelievers felt the need of toleration *for themselves*, and then they generally advocated it on behalf of others; but of late, owing perhaps to the increase of their numbers, they have assumed a loftier tone. Now, though for political reasons, all men must be allowed to follow their own religion, yet they *must not aim at making proselytes*. Men who have no belief in the Christian religion, may be expected to have no regard for it; and where this is the case, the rights of conscience will be but little respected.

So far as my observations extend, these remarks are applicable to Deists in general; and where situations are favorable to their views, they may be expected to rise in their demands. In a letter from Mr. Carey, now before me, of a late date, he writes as follows:—"India swarms with Deists; and Deists are, in my opinion, the most intolerant of mankind. Their great desire is to exterminate true religion from the earth. I consider the *alarms* which have been spread through India, as the fabrications of these men. The concurrence of two or three circumstances, in point of time; namely, the massacre at Vellore, the rebellious disposition of the inhabitants in some parts of Mysore, and the public advertisements for subscriptions to the oriental translations, have furnished them with occasion to represent the introduction of Christianity among the natives, as dangerous."

While Mr. Carey was writing this letter, Sir, he might not be aware that a number of these men were preparing to embark for Europe, with a view to spread the *alarm* at home. Assuredly they have *a cause in which they are engaged*, as well as the Bible Soci-

ety; and are not wanting in zeal to support it. Mr. Twining would be thought a *Christian:* but, if so, in what cause is he engaged? He may pretend that he is only pleading for toleration; but, in fact, he is pleading for the exclusion of what he acknowledges to be *light* and *truth*, and for the refusal of toleration to the religion of his Maker.

As "the religious opinions and customs of the natives of India" are a subject on which Mr. Twining's feelings are so "particularly alive," it may not be amiss to state what a few of these opinions are. It may not be necessary, Sir, for your information; but some persons into whose hands this pamphlet may fall, may be the better able to judge of the question at issue.

In the first place, then, the Hindoos acknowledge ONE SUPREME GOD: they do not appear, however, to worship Him, but certain subordinate powers, which, they say, proceeded from him. Of these, the three principal are denominated BIRMHA, the creator of all; VISHNOO, the preserver of all; and SEEB, the destroyer of all. Birmha is not worshipped at all: Vishnoo only by a few; but Seeb (the destroyer) by almost all: their worship, therefore, is chiefly the effect of superstitious *fears*. The foulest vices are ascribed to these subordinate deities in their own shasters; but that, which is sin in men, they say, is not sin in the gods. Besides these, they worship innumerable inferior deities, called *debtas*, chiefly, if not entirely, under an idea that it is in their power to do them harm. The lusts, quarrels, and other vices of these debtas also fill their shasters, as their images do the country. The chief use that they seem to make of the one Supreme God is to ascribe to him all the evil that they commit, and to persuade themselves that they are not accountable beings.

They have a most firm faith in conjuration, in lucky and unlucky days; and in almost all their civil concerns act under its influence.

A considerable part of their religion consists in *self-torment.* One will hold up a hand till it is grown stiff, and he is incapable of taking it down again: another will lie upon the points of iron spikes, just so blunt as not to pierce him to death, and this for years together; others, on certain days at the beginning of the new year, are

suspended in the air by sharp iron hooks, stuck through the skin on each side of their back, and continue swinging round in that position from five to fifteen minutes. At the worship of JUGGERNAUT, whose temple is in Orissa, this massy wooden god is borne in a carriage, drawn by the multitude; and while the air resounds with their shouts, happy are those who throw themselves under the wheels to be crushed to death! This, and every other species of self-torment and self-murder, gains admiration from the spectators.

Besides this, it is well known to be a part of their religion to favour the *burning of widows* with the bodies of their deceased husbands. Their shasters pronounce this to be *a great virtue, and to render them a kind of celestial beings.* And lest the circumstance of absence at the time of the husband's death should prevent it, their laws prescribe as follows: "If the wife be within one day's journey of the place where her husband dies, the burning of his corpse shall be deferred one day for her arrival. If he die in another country, the virtuous wife shall take any of his *effects*, a sandal for instance, and binding it on her thigh, shall enter the fire with it." Thus careful are these sacred laws to secure their victim. And, as if it were meant to outrage every vestige of humanity, and to refine upon cruelty, it is an established law, that the eldest son, or nearest relation, shall set fire to the pile!

Great numbers of *infants* also are thrown into the river, as offerings to the goddess; and others, who refuse their mother's milk, are frequently hung up in a basket on the branch of a tree, to be devoured by ants, or birds of prey!

Whether all these customs be proper objects of toleration, may admit of a doubt. The British government in India seems to have thought otherwise. The Governor General in Council, on Aug. 20, 1802, is said to have passed a decree declaring some of them to be murder. We leave this, however, to the civil authorities. *Our* object is confined to remonstrance, persuasion, and the exhibition of truth: and surely, if it be possible by such means to induce a people or any part of a people, to cast away these practices, it must be so far favourable to human happiness. If, Sir, there

were *no* hereafter, and we were merely to consult our own national interest, it were worth while, as far as possible, to endeavour to mitigate these evils: but if the good of the governed be allowed to have place in a government, it is still more so: and if there be a judgment to come, where governors and governed must each appear and give an account, it must be an object of the first importance. At that bar, Sir, the adversaries of those who peacefully endeavour to bring off the Hindoos from these abominations, will be ashamed to show their faces!

I may be told, that the particulars above referred to are the most offensive parts of the system, and that other parts of it may be very good. It is true there are degrees in evil. All things pertaining to Hindooism may not be equally shocking to the feelings of an enlightened mind. I might safely affirm, however, with Dr. Buchanan, "The Hindoos have no moral gods:" neither does any part of their religion produce a moral impression on their minds, but the contrary. As men, they are not worse than other men: but by their superstitions they are becoming exceedingly corrupt.

"The natives of India," Mr. Twining tells us, "are a *religious* people; and in this respect they differ, he *fears*, from the inhabitants of this country. If, by the inhabitants of this country, he mean those Christians who are alarmed at the progress of Christianity, I fear so too. If the religion of the natives of India, however, have no influence on their morals, unless it be to corrupt them, it will argue nothing in its favour. And that this is the case, every friend to the morality of the New Testament, who has resided in India, can bear witness. I have read enough, Sir, of the communications of men of this description, to make me disregard the praises bestowed on the virtues of these people by others. I find these praises proceed either from deistical writers, whose manifest design is to depreciate the value of Christianity, or from persons residing in the country, who, "despairing," as Dr. Buchanan says, "of the intellectual or moral improvement of the natives, are content with an obsequious spirit and manual service. These they call the virtues of the Hindoo; and after twenty year's service, praise their domestic for his *virtues*."

"I know not," says Bernier, an intelligent French traveller, "whether there be in the world a more covetous and sordid nation.—The brahmans keep these people in their errors and superstitions, and scruple not to commit tricks and villanies so infamous, that I could never have believed them, if I had not made an ample inquiry into them."*

—"A race of people," says Governor Holwell, "who from their infancy are utter strangers to the idea of common faith and honesty. This is the situation of the bulk of the people of Hindostan, as well as of the modern brahmans; amongst the latter, if we except one in a thousand, we give them over measure. The Gentoos, in general, are as degenerate, superstitious, litigious, and wicked a people, as any race of people in the known world, if not eminently more so, especially the common run of brahmans; and we can truly aver, that during almost five years that we presided in the Judicial Cutchery Court of Calcutta, never any murder, or other atrocious crime came before us, but it was proved, in the end, a brahman was at the bottom of it."†

"A man must be long acquainted with them," says Sir John Shore, Governor General of Bengal, "before he can believe them capable of that barefaced falsehood, servile adulation, and deliberate deception, which they daily practise. It is the business of all from the Ryott to the Dewan, to conceal and deceive: the simplest matters of fact are designedly covered with a veil, through which no human understanding can penetrate."‡

"Lying, theft, whoredom, and deceit," says Mr. Carey, "are sins for which the Hindoos are notorious. There is not one man in a thousand who does not make lying his constant practice. Their thoughts of God are so very light, that they only consider him as a sort of plaything. Avarice and servility are so united in almost every individual, that cheating, juggling, and lying, are esteemed no sins with them; and the best among them, though they

* Voyages de Francois Bernier, Tome I. pp. 150. 162, et Tome II. p. 105.

† Holwell's Historical Events, Vol. I. p. 228. Vol. II. p. 151.

‡ Parliamentary Proceedings against Mr. Hastings, Appendix to Vol. II. p. 65.

speak ever so great a falsehood, yet it is not considered as an evil, unless you first charge them to speak the truth. When they defraud you ever so much, and you charge them with it, they coolly answer, 'It is the custom of the country.' Were you to charge any company of ten men with having amongst them liars, thieves, whoremongers, and deceitful characters, however improper it might be, owing to your want of proof, yet there would be little probability of your accusing them falsely. All the good that can with justice be said in favour of them is, they are not so ferocious as many other heathens."

I have said nothing of the Mahometans; but it is well known that they are not behind the Hindoos in superstition, and greatly exceed them in ferocity, pride, and intolerance.

In short, Sir, to every European who places virtue in the fear of God and a regard to men, and not in that which merely contributes to his own interest and inclination, the introduction of the means of Christianity, among both Hindoos and Mahometans, must appear a matter of national importance. Christianity might not be embraced, at first, by the greater part; but it would, nevertheless, have a powerful influence on society; not only on those who believed it, but, by way of example, on those who believed it not.

But Mr. Twining professes to be alarmed at the measure, as *dangerous* to the British interests in India. He asserts this again and again; but what has he done beyond asserting it. Has he produced a single fact that can bear upon the subject; or preferred a single charge against the conduct of the Missionaries? Neither the one nor the other. It is rather surprising, indeed, that he should not have discovered something on which to found the appearance of a charge; for I am not ignorant, Sir, that the Missionaries have on some occasions felt much, and spoken in strong language. They have frequently seen females burnt alive, and have remonstrated against the horrid deed, as an act of murder; taking occasion also from thence to prove to the people, that such a religion could not be of God. If, at such times, there had been somewhat of a local tumult, there had been nothing surprising in it. But the truth is, no such tumult has ever occurred; nor have

any means which they have used, so much as endangered their own safety.

Mr. Twining speaks of *alarms* among the natives; but what are they? When, or where did they manifest themselves? If, by "alarms," he mean a conviction that their principles will gradually fall before the light of the gospel, there is some foundation for what he says; for considerable numbers of them have calmly acknowledged as much as this. But if he mean, that, on account of any thing done or doing by the Missionaries, they are apprehensive of their religion being suppressed by authority, there is no proof of the fact, nor so much as an attempt to prove it. Nothing can furnish stronger evidence of Mr. Twining's want of materials of this kind, than his reference to "the recent catastrophes of Buenos Ayres, Rosetta, and Vellore." (p. 27.) You need not be told, Sir, that none of these catastrophes were produced by an attempt to recommend our religious principles.

That alarms may exist in India is very possible; but if such there be, they are of a date posterior to the Vellore mutiny, and must be traced, it is probable, to the causes which produced that melancholy event. That the labours of the Missionaries, either in Bengal, or on the Coast, have been productive of any such effect, remains to be proved. The only alarm which they have excited, will be found in the minds of Europeans, who, passing under the name of Christians, are tremblingly alive to the danger of Christianity making progress in the earth.

If, by "the LIGHT and TRUTH into which the omnipotent power of heaven may some time lead these people," Mr. Twining mean Christianity, his pamphlet exhibits, to say the least, an awkward association of ideas. Of Mr. Twining, I know nothing but from the part he has taken in this business, and therefore can have no personal disrespect towards him: but I cannot understand, Sir, how a *Christian* could be disgusted with the idea expressed by a Swabian Catholic, of "the great shepherd and bishop of souls gathering together his sheep from all nations and religions, languages, and kingdoms:" (pp. 9, 10.) how, in searching for something which the British nation values as the Hindoos do their Shasters, and the Mahometans their Koran, he should overlook

the Bible, and instance in "Magna Charta;" (p. 30.) how he can be shocked at the downfall of Mahometanism; (p. 17.) how his feelings can be so "particularly alive" on the religious opinions of the natives of India; (p. 29.) and above all, how he can be so *alarmed* at the progress of Christianity. It is true, he professes to feel on this subject chiefly from his "extreme apprehension of the fatal consequences to ourselves." But if so, why do his alarms extend to Turkey, and even to China? (pp. 15. 17.) Is he afraid that, if the Mahometanism of the one, and the Paganism of the other, should give place to the gospel, they would refuse to trade with us? Surely, Sir, there can be but little doubt of this gentleman's being "of a party," nor of what that party is.

May I not take it for granted, Sir, that a British Government cannot refuse to tolerate Protestant Missionaries; that a Protestant Government cannot forbid the free circulation of the scriptures; that a Christian Government cannot exclude Christianity from any part of its territories; and that if, in addition to this, the measures which have of late been pursued in India, without the least inconvenience arising from them, can be proved to be *safe* and *wise*, they will be protected, rather than suppressed? I trust I may.

Permit me, Sir, to copy an extract or two from the letters of the Missionaries on this subject. "No political evil," says Mr. Carey, "can reasonably be feared from the spread of Christianity now: for it has been publicly preached in different parts of Bengal for about twenty years past, without the smallest symptom of the kind. Within the last five years, an edition of the New Testament, of two thousand copies, nearly one of the Pentateuch of a thousand, one of Matthew of five hundred, and one of the Psalms and Isaiah of a thousand, besides many copies of a second edition of the New Testament, and of the Poetical Books of scripture, from Job to Canticles, and many religious tracts have been distributed among the natives without a single instance of disturbance, unless the abusive language of a few loose persons may be so called. To this might be added, the experience of the Missionaries on the Coast, who have taught Christianity for a hundred years, and reckon about forty thousand persons to have embraced it. Such long-continued exertions to spread the gospel, carried on to

such an extent, and in such different situations, without producing the smallest inconvenience, may, we presume, furnish a course of experience sufficient to remove every suspicion of political evil arising from the introduction of Christianity.

"The tongue of slander itself," says Mr. Marshman, "has not been able to charge us, nor any of the native converts, with the least deviation from the laws and government under which we live. How should it; when we are devoted from our very hearts to the British government; and this, not from a blind partiality, but from a firm conviction of its being a blessing to the country? Had we been sent hither for the sole purpose of conciliating the natives to it, and of supporting it by every means in our power, we could not have been more cordially attached to it, nor have pursued a line of conduct more adapted to the end. Nothing will so effectually establish the British dominion in India, as the introduction of Christianity, provided it be merely by persuasion; and nothing is more *safe*, and under a divine blessing, more *easy*.

With regard to *safety*, there is nothing to be feared from the attempt. The Hindoos resemble an immense number of particles of sand, which are incapable of forming a solid mass. There is no bond of union among them, nor any principle capable of effecting it. Their hierarchy has no head, no influential body, no subordinate orders. The brahmans, as well as the nation at large, are a vast number of disconnected atoms, totally incapable of cohesion. In this country, sin seems to have given the fullest sample of its disuniting, debilitating power. The children are opposed to the parents, and the parents to the children; brother totally disregards brother; and a brahman will see another brahman perish with the greatest apathy. Yea, for the sake of a little gain, a brahman will write against his gods, satisfying himself with this, that the sin belongs to his employer, and that he only does something to support himself. When to this are added, their natural imbecility and the enervating influence of climate, it will be evident that nothing is less to be apprehended than a steady, concerted opposition to the spread of Christianity. Nothing will ever appear beyond that individual contempt and hatred of the gospel which are inseparable from the vicious mind.

"Instead of the introduction of Christianity endangering the safety of the state, the danger arises from the other side. No one, unacquainted with the natives, can know the heart of an idolater. We have about a hundred servants in our different departments; and they have been treated with a kindness which, in England, would have conciliated affection and created attachment. But so far are these effects from being produced in them, that not an individual can be found amongst them, who would not cheat us to any extent; or who would not plunder us of every thing we have, were it in their power. How can it be otherwise? Their religion frees them from every tie of justice. If their own benefit can be secured by any action, this renders it lawful, or at least venial, though it were fraud, robbery, or even murder. Often have we heard it affirmed, that a robber who should spend the whole night in the most atrocious deeds, and secure plunder to the amount of a hundred rupees, would wipe off all the stain in the morning, by giving one of them to a brahman! Attachment to a master, a family, or a government of a different religion, is that which cannot be produced in the mind of a Hindoo, while under the power of his gooroo or his debta. But if they lose cast, and embrace Christianity, not by force, but from pure conviction, they become other men. Even those who, as it may prove, have not embraced it cordially, are considerably influenced by it. If once they lose cast, the charm is broken, and they become capable of attachment to government.

"These remarks are abundantly proved by what is seen in our native converts. We have baptized above a hundred of them: and we dare affirm, that the British government has not a hundred better subjects, and more cordial friends, among the natives of Hindostan. The gloomy and faithless demon of superstition is dethroned from their hearts. They cannot fear a brahman nor a debta, as heretofore. While they feel an attachment to us, to which they had been strangers, they are also cordially attached to the governors who protect them in the exercise of their religion, and whom they consider as their friends and brethren.

"Such is the *ease* with which Christianity, under the divine blessing could be disseminated, that it may seem to some incredi-

ble. No public acts of government are necessary. It is not necessary that government should appear in the business; and much less that it should be at any expense whatever. If it be only understood that no one shall be forbidden to teach Christianity, and no one but the *evil doer* receive interruption from the magistrate, the work will go on in the most gradual and yet effectual manner. God is raising up native converts of character and talents suited to it. It is possible for ten of these brethren to enter a district, to go unobserved through the principal towns, sit down in a private circle, gently reason, convey ideas of divine truth, and turn persons from darkness to light, nearly unobserved. Thus a town, a district, a country could be leavened with the blessed gospel, almost without the knowledge of the wealthy and the great, even of their own countrymen.

"The only thing necessary for European Missionaries is, that as long as they deserve the confidence of government, they be permitted to fix their residence in those places which will enable them to exercise a necessary superintendence, and administer support to these native brethren; to visit the societies which are formed; and, as occasion offers, dispense with prudence the word of life. It were the easiest thing imaginable for government to obtain from European Missionaries the most ample pledges of good behaviour, and to withdraw its protection the moment they ceased to deserve it. A good man would feel a pleasure in giving such security; and what is more, his being a good man would itself be a security. What security could have been exacted from a Schwartz, equal to that which his own wise and benevolent heart afforded? Nor is this peculiar to Schwartz; it is the feeling of every real Missionary.

"A permission to itinerate and form missionary stations in the country, so far from being injurious to the British government, would advance its essential interests. In every Missionary it would have a friend; a friend whose influence and capacity of rendering service would be constantly increasing. What were the advantatages which the English derived from one Schwartz, in the Mysore country? And what would be the effect of their having at this moment a hundred Schwartz's in India, each with his train of pious.

peaceable, loyal, and faithful disciples? These messengers of peace and love (and all others we give up) would endear to the inhabitants the very nation to which they belonged. 'Who are these,' they would ask, 'that so manifestly seek our good, and not their own?' The answer, that they are English, must exhibit an idea of the government and nation which the natives can never have displayed before their eyes too often.

"But, if a Missionary could so far forget himself and his object, as to cherish a spirit inimical to government, still, one would suppose, his own interest would correct him. To whom are he and his friends indebted for security? Without the protection of government, they would be continually in danger of being plundered and massacred. If, however, the folly of any one should render him insensible to these considerations, he must abide the consequences. Let him bear his own burden."

Sir, I cannot persuade myself that the East India Company will adopt the principles of Mr. Twining. They have too much good sense to be alarmed at every outcry; too much justice to ascribe danger to causes from which it never arose; and too much wisdom to banish men, who have always approved themselves the faithful friends of their government. Whatever be the mind of individuals, I trust that neither they, nor the British government, as a body, are prepared to prohibit the free circulation of the scriptures, or the temperate propagation of Christianity.

I am aware, indeed, that persecution has of late made its appearance in our *West* India Colonies; and if Mr. Twining and his party could succeed, there is too much reason to fear that we should see the same thing in the East; but I am also aware that, in the first instance, it was disallowed by His MAJESTY IN COUNCIL; and though it has since been revived on a narrower scale, yet I trust it will not be permitted, either in the West, or in the East, to accomplish its end.

It is not difficult, Sir, to account for that aversion from religion which is so frequently found in men who have left their country at an early period, in pursuit of a fortune. They neither understood nor believed the gospel when at home; and on going abroad took leave of Christian ordinances, and of all respect for them.

They may wish, indeed, for certain reasons, to retain the name of Christians; but that is all: they cannot bear the thing, nor that any about them should be in earnest in the profession of it. But, whatever measures may be taken by men, who have become aliens from that which is the glory of their country, I trust there will be found a sufficient number of the rulers and inhabitants of this land to counteract them. If not, let us talk as we may against French atheism, we are fast sinking into it.

If, Sir, there be a God that judgeth in the earth, the danger lies in making HIM our enemy. It is a principle which cannot be disputed, however it may be disregarded, THAT WHATEVER IS RIGHT, IS WISE; AND WHATEVER IS WRONG, IS FOOLISH AND DANGEROUS. Sir, the tombs of nations, successively buried in oblivion, have this truth inscribed on every one of them. It was by "forbidding Christian ministers to speak unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved, that the most favoured nation upon earth filled up the measure of its sins, and drew upon it the wrath of heaven to the uttermost!"

At a time, Sir, when many and great nations are overthrown; nations which have not possessed our privileges, and therefore have not incurred our guilt; when we are engaged in the most tremendous struggle that this country ever knew, a struggle for our very existence; and when, on certain occasions, we profess to fast, and to humble ourselves before Almighty God; shall we raise from its slumbers the wicked system of PERSECUTION? *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than* HE?

Mr. Twining may be disgusted at the idea of the Eastern empire being given us by providence, *for the very purpose* of introducing the gospel; (p. 25.) but if it be so, it is no more than God's having formerly given it to Cyrus, *for Jacob his servant's sake.** Men may scorn to be subservient to their Maker; but whether they consent or not, it will be so. The conquests of Rome made way for the introduction of Christianity into Britain; and those of Britain may make way for its general introduction in the East. Should Britain be friendly to this object, it may be the lengthening

* Isa. xlv. 1—4.

of her tranquillity; but, as an eloquent writer* observes, "If we decline the illustrious appointment, God may devolve on some less refractory people, those high destinies which might have been ours. *Who knoweth whether we are come to the kingdom for such a time as this? If we altogether hold our peace at this time, then may there enlargement and deliverance arise to them from another place, and we and our father's house may be destroyed.*"

I am,

SIR,

Very respectfully yours,

ANDREW FULLER.

* Mr. Wrangham's Sermon, On the Translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental Languages, preached before the University of Cambridge, on May 10, 1807. (p 11.)

STRICTURES

ON A

PREFACE TO A PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

"OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY."

This performance, though anonymous, has been generally ascribed to Major Scott Waring: and as I understand that that gentleman has since publicly avowed himself to be the author, I shall consider him as such in the following remarks.

Mr. Twining's performance had scarcely any thing tangible about it. It was chiefly made up of quotations, with here and there a sentence distinguished by italics, or capitals of different sizes, according, it should seem, to the different degrees of suspicion and alarm which possessed the mind of the author. But Major Scott Waring attempts to reason; and as he certainly has entered into the subject *with all his heart*, we may hope, from hence, to ascertain the real strength of our adversaries.

Having given his preface a cursory review, I determined, before I sat down to answer it, to read through his pamphlet; and on looking it over, I found that though the "Observations" related chiefly to things beside my province, yet they contained passages worthy of attention; especially when compared with others, and with the general design of his performance. A few of these I shall take the liberty to transcribe.

"For many centuries, we believe, Christian Missionaries have resided in India, with the free consent of the native princes. These men were generally, if not universally, pure in their morals, and inoffensive in their conduct; and many of them highly respect-

ed by the princes of India, who allowed them to preach the gospel, and to make as many converts as they could to the Christian religion." (p. 9.)

"Missionaries can do no mischief in India, if they are treated as formerly; neither encouraged, nor oppressed; but if men paid by the British government are encouraged to make converts to Christianity, our empire will be in danger." (p. 14.)

"The Missionaries now in India, or those who may go thither in future, should be treated by our government as they formerly were by the native princes. In that case, they may be as zealous as possible without doing mischief. Mr. Buchanan says that the Four Gospels have been translated, and liberally distributed. If that was done at the expense of the Bible Society in England, or of the other religious societies in Europe, the measure was laudable; but, if at the expense of the Company, and from their press, it was most impolitic, and made use of, no doubt, by the sons of Tippoo Sultaun, to excite the Seapoys to mutiny. The true line for the British government to pursue, is obvious; let Missionaries make as many converts as they can, but give them no support on the one hand, nor discouragement on the other. Let us copy the example of the native princes in allowing the Missionaries of this day to preach the gospel also, but there let us stop." (pp. 22, 23.)

"No jealousy was ever entertained, either by Mahomedan or Hindoo princes, because Missionaries were settled in their countries who now and then converted one of their subjects to Christianity. No jealousy will now be entertained of their having similar success, while the British government, which stands in possession of the power formerly enjoyed by the native princes, is contented merely with following their example." (p. 25.)

As I have no concern in any plan which would be expensive to government, or would require their interference in any way beyond simple protection to the Missionaries, and that no longer than their conduct is found to be deserving of it, I have no dispute with Major Scott Waring on what he has here advanced. If he suspects Mr. Carey to be *paid* by government, or the translations in which he is engaged to be printed or circulated at their *expense*, I can assure him it is without foundation. The salary which he receives

is not as a Missionary, but merely as a Professor of the Shanscrit and Bengalee languages. Government knows nothing of him, or his colleagues, as Missionaries, any farther than when mentioning certain literary works, to speak of those works as undertaken by "the Protestant Missionaries at Serampore." Mr. Carey's salary is the due reward of his labours, as a literary man. It is true, he disinterestedly devotes all his savings to the work of spreading the gospel: but the same may be said of more than one of his colleagues, who have no connexion with government, and whose avocations are productive of little, if any thing, less than his. And whatever has been done by the Missionaries in translating and circulating the scriptures, has been done at the expense of societies and individuals. Whether any translations have been printed at the Company's press, I cannot speak with certainty. I think it is highly probable they have not; of this, however, I am certain, that those which are enumerated by Mr. Carey, [in page 212 of this volume,] were printed at Serampore. When it was determined to translate the scriptures into all the Eastern languages, government permitted them to advertise in their Gazette for subscriptions to the work: but to argue from hence that they had any pecuniary concern in the undertaking, is absurd; for if so, what need was there to advertise for *private* subscriptions?

Upon the whole, it follows, that what has been done is, in Major Scott Waring's opinion, "laudable," and was not made use of to excite the Seapoys to mutiny. And here I might take leave of this gentleman, were it not for his preface, with the satisfaction of our labours having obtained his approbation and applause. For, as to what he says of the *hopelessness* of attempting to convert the Hindoos, that is to ourselves. We derive hope from a book with which he may be but little acquainted; and so long as we do "no mischief," why should we be interrupted?

But when I look into the preface, I find a new and a contradictory publication. Whether the "observations" were written at so distant a period that he had forgotten them, or whether the late "intelligence from Madras" proved so alarming to him as to produce an entire change in his principles; whatever was the

cause, there is certainly a most violent opposition between the one and the other.

Before we proceed to examine this extraordinary preface, which is nearly as large as the book itself, it may be proper to remark, that Major Scott Waring knows nothing of the effects of Christian Missions in India of late years, but from *the report of their adversaries*. The reader will recollect what was quoted from Mr. Carey's letter of Feb. 13, 1807, [in page 205 of this volume,] and the intimation there given, of *a number of persons who were at that time preparing to embark for Europe, with a view to spread the alarm at home*. These are the men from whom the author derives his intelligence. "Various *private accounts*," says he, "*from men of sense, observation, and character*, mention," &c. (p. 1.) And again, "I am assured, by *a gentleman lately returned from India*, that," &c. (p. xlii.). These or some other gentlemen like-minded, have been endeavouring by *private letters*, during the whole of 1807, to excite suspicions against us. But when told of these things, our answer has been, 'Let us not be judged by private letters: let our adversaries come forward and accuse the Missionaries; or, at least, give proof of their labours having been injurious.'*

I know not who these gentlemen are, and therefore can have no personal disrespect to any of them: but, whoever they be, I have no scruple in saying, that their reports, as given in the performance before me, are *utterly unworthy of credit*. Of this the reader will be convinced, I presume, in the course of these remarks.

Major Scott Waring, as if conscious that *private* reports were of no use, unless to fill up the deficiencies of what is public and authentic, begins with the *Proclamation from the Madras Government, on Dec.* 3, 1806; that is about six months after the mutiny at Vellore. This proclamation states, that, in some late instances, an extraordinary degree of agitation had prevailed among several corps of the native army of that coast—that on inquiry into the cause, it appeared that many persons of evil intention had endea-

* Private intelligence is proper on some occasions; but in cases of accusation, no man should be able to take away another's character without risking his own.

voured, for malicious purposes, to impress upon the native troops a belief that it was the wish of the British government to convert them by forcible means, to Christianity—that such malicious reports had been observed with concern to be believed by many of the native troops—and that they were utterly without foundation. (pp. i—v.)

Such is "the alarming intelligence lately received from Madras." From hence, Major Scott Waring takes occasion "humbly to submit to the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company and the Legislature, a plan for restoring that confidence which the natives formerly reposed in the justice and policy of the British government, as to the security of that religion, laws, and local customs." And what is it? Nothing less than "THE IMMEDIATE RECALL OF EVERY ENGLISH MISSIONARY, AND A PROHIBITION TO ALL PERSONS DEPENDANT ON THE COMPANY FROM GIVING ASSISTANCE TO THE TRANSLATION OR CIRCULATION OF OUR HOLY SCRIPTURES." (p. xvii.) These the author thinks "the most, and, indeed, the only efficacious, measures." That they would be efficacious, there can be no doubt; and such would be the application of the guillotine for the cure of the head-ache; but whether it be just or wise, is another question.

If I had written the "observations," and had been afterwards convinced that the principles they contained were erroneous, I think I should not have sent out a new edition of them: or, if justice had failed to influence me, a regard to consistency would have prevented my publishing them and their refutation in the same pamphlet, but to publish that refutation *in the form of a preface*, is beyond every thing. To preface his work by contradicting its leading principles, is advertising his reader that he has sold him a bad commodity. Should His Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company, or the Legislature, attend to this gentleman's performance, in what part are they to regard him? In the preface they are advised "immediately to recall every English Missionary;" but, as they read on, they are told, that "the true line for the British government to pursue is obvious; let Missionaries be as zealous as they may, and make as many converts as they can, provided they be neither encouraged on the one hand, nor discouraged on the other, they can do no mischief."

What then are they to do, unless it be to disregard the whole as nugatory

And what have these English Missionaries done, that they are to be immediately recalled; and these holy scriptures, that they are not to be translated or circulated by any one dependant on the Company? Nothing. As to the former, it is not pretended that they had any hand in the tragical event at Vellore. On the contrary, they are expressly acquitted of it. (p. xi.) And as to the latter, no accusation has yet been brought against them. But evil-minded men, it seems, have taken *occasion*, from the increase of the one, and the gratuitous circulation of the other, to misrepresent the designs of government; and, therefore, it is *necessary* to proceed to this extremity. The author, it must be acknowledged, has hit upon a happy expedient for suppressing the scriptures: for if he can once get the men who are employed in translating and circulating them recalled, there is no danger of their doing any further mischief. So long as they are locked up in an unknown language, all Asia may continue from generation to generation under the dominion of imposture.

But why must the Missionaries be recalled *immediately?* It was said by a wise heathen, *Ye ought to do nothing rashly.* Permit us, at least, to ask a question or two before we are condemned.

In the first place: WHEN *were these misrepresentations made?* Is there any proof of their having existed *before* the mutiny, so as to have had any influence in producing it? None at all. But we are told, that "It is *impossible,* impolitic as the measure was, that the mere change in the dress of the Seapoys, could have produced a general belief, that the British government was resolved to compel them to embrace Christianity." (p. l.) I answer, there is no proof that such a *general belief existed;* no not six months afterwards, when the proclamation was issued: for it was *then* alleged to have extended only to "several corps of the native army on the coast;" and *at the time of the mutiny* there is no proof of any other belief than what arose from the impositions. With what colour of evidence can this writer pretend that "the *great increase* of English Missionaries of late years, and the gratuitous distribution of of our sacred scriptures *throughout the whole country*," were CON-

NECTED with the impositions in dress, in the representations made to the Seapoys, when in the same sentence he acknowledges those impositions to have *affected their religion?* Allowing it to be what he calls it, "*a religious mutiny*," yet the impositions in dress were competent to produce it. Had he not been determined to bring in these Missionaries, and these holy scriptures, at any rate, he would have concluded, that the other causes were "sufficient to create the alarm," without any thing else being connected with them. But "various *private accounts*, from men of sense, observation, and character, mention, that the great increase of Missionaries, the profuse and gratuitous circulation of the scriptures, *added* to the change of dress, were represented as proofs of our resolution ultimately to compel them to become Christians." (p. l.) Ah that is it! Major Scott Waring knows of nothing antecedent to the mutiny; the proclamation knows of nothing; but "*private accounts from men of sense, observation and character*," make known every thing. And what have they to say on this subject? They tell of the *great increase of English Missionaries* of late years. It is possible, they may be about fifteen or sixteen: but nine of them, by Major Scott Waring's own reckoning, are in Bengal, where no alarm worth mentioning has existed, except in the minds of Europeans. They also tell of "the gratuitous circulation of the scriptures, *throughout the whole country*." (pp. x. l.) The truth is, I believe, that the gratuitous circulation of the scriptures, has been hitherto confined to Bengal. Thus much, at present, for the private accounts of these *men of sense, observation, and character;* but for whose information, we could not have known of any misrepresentations being made to the Seapoys, *prior* to the Vellore mutiny.

We ask, secondly, Who *were the authors of these misrepresentations?* The proclamation does not inform us; and probably government did not know, or they would have punished the offenders. But whether it be from the *private accounts* of these *men of sense, observation, and character*, or from some other source of information, Major Scott Waring makes it out that they were "disaffected natives, of the Carnatic and the Mysore." (p. x.) This, if applied to what took place *subsequent* to the mutiny, may have

some truth in it, or it may not. The evil-minded persons referred to in the proclamation, who appear to have availed themselves of the mutiny to increase the alarm, might be disaffected natives, or they might be Europeans, who, from aversion to Christianity, and a desire to get the scriptures suppressed and the Missionaries recalled, suggested such things to the Seapoys as might accomplish their end. It is remarkable, that in the very passage in which this writer speaks in so positive a strain of "the disaffected men of the Carnatic and the Mysore" having taking advantage of our folly, and excited the troops to mutiny; he exonerates the sons of Tippoo Sultaun, whom he had before, with equal positivity, condemned. "We *know*," he had said in his Observations, "that the mutiny was excited by the sons of Tippoo Sultaun, whose emissaries insinuated that the change which we wished to adopt in the dress of the Seapoys, was only a preparatory step towards the accomplishment of our great object, which was to compel them to embrace Christianity," (p. 8.) But in preface, (p. x.) he says, "From later information I have reason to believe, that the sons of Tippoo Sultaun are innocent of the charge preferred against them but the disaffected men of the Carnatic and the Mysore *did* take advantage of our folly; and that they excited the troops to a *religious mutiny* is beyond a doubt." If this gentleman's *knowledge* be thus unfounded, though so very minute and particular that he would almost seem to have been an ear-witness, what is to be thought of his conjectures? and what to make of this last account more than conjecture, I cannot tell. His eagerness to charge the disaffected natives looks as if *some other people* were suspected. Let us hear the other side.

Mr. Carey says, "India swarms with Deists; and Deists are in my opinion, the most intolerant of mankind. Their great desire is to exterminate true religion from the earth. *I consider the alarms which have been spread through India as the fabrications of these men.* The concurrence of two or three circumstances, in point of time; namely, the massacre at Vellore, the rebellious disposition of the inhabitants in some part of Mysore, and the public advertisements for subscriptions to the oriental translations,

have furnished them with occasion to represent the introduction of Christianity among the natives as dangerous."

Dr. Kerr's Report, dated Madras, July 23, 1807, twelve months after the mutiny, confirms Mr. Carey's statement. He clearly shows that, in his opinion, the evil-minded persons, who industriously circulated reports nearly allied to the above, were not natives, but Europeans, *hostile to religion and its interests*. "Various reports," says he, "have been industriously circulated by evil-minded persons, hostile to religion and its interests, that the natives would be alarmed were Missionaries allowed to come out to India; but I feel myself authorized, by a near acquaintance with many of the Protestant Missionaries now in India, and a perfect knowledge of the respect which is entertained for them by all descriptions of the natives, to repeat what I have formerly stated to government, that these men are, and always have been, more beloved by the natives than any other class of Europeans; and it is to be accounted for on the most rational grounds—that is, they learn their language intimately; they associate with them in a peaceable, humble manner, and do them every act of kindness in their power; while, at the same time, the example of their Christian lives produces the very highest respect among heathens, unaccustomed to behold such excellence amongst each other. The lives of such men in India have always been a blessing to the country, and I heartily wish that all such characters may be encouraged to come amongst us."

The above statements from Mr. Carey, and Dr. Kerr, I may venture to place against the *anonymous accounts of men of sense, observation, and character;* and if they be true, they not only furnish an exposition to the labours of Messrs. Twining, Scott Waring, and Co. but fully account for those apprehensions which, it is said, "existed as late as March, 1807, three months after the date of the proclamation; and which induced the British officers attached to the native corps, constantly to sleep with loaded pistols under their pillows." (p. xi.) An event so tragical as that at Vellore, would itself, indeed, suggest the necessity of such a precaution, and that for a considerable time after it; and still more so, when the flame was fanned by evil-minded persons. Yes, reader,

if these statements be true, it follows, that the enemies of Christianity, after having themselves excited these alarms, are now actually attempting to transfer the responsibility for their consequences to the Missionaries.

We ask, lastly, *Let these misrepresentations have been fabricated when, and by whom they might, Is it* JUST *or* WISE, *to recall those persons who are acknowledged to have had no concern in them, or to suppress the circulation of the holy scriptures on that account.*

A great outrage has certainly been committed. What was the cause? According to Major Scott Waring, the Madras government acted *absurdly;* first, in changing so suddenly a native to an English administration, and then in imposing such alterations in the dress of the Seapoys as affected their religion. And when, in addition to this, they were told, by evil-minded persons, of the great increase of Missionaries, and the gratuitous circulation of the scriptures throughout the country, they believed government intended to compel them to become Christians; and though the thing was not true, yet it was by no means *irrational* for them to believe it. (pp. ix, x.) Supposing this account to be correct, where is the *justice* of punishing men for their numbers being magnified, and their labours misrepresented by others? If an atonement be necessary, why select *them* as victims? If, indeed, the evil-minded incendiaries, who misrepresented their designs, and those of government, could be detected, it might answer a good end to punish them; but if this cannot be accomplished, let not the innocent suffer.

Major Scott Waring seems, indeed, to give up the *justice* of the measure; but yet contends for it as of "absolute *necessity,* seeing the proclamation had not lulled the suspicions of the people." (p. xi.) Such are the Machiavelian politics of this gentleman. Could we suppose him to be sufficiently acquainted with the New Testament, we might suspect that he had taken up this opinion from Caiphas, the Jewish high-priest, who advised the crucifixion of our Lord, on the principle of its being "*expedient* that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."*

* John xi. 49, 50.

"It is necessary to convince the natives," says this writer, "not only that we never did entertain the wild idea of compelling them to embrace Christianity, but that we have not a *wish* to convert them." (p. vi.) It cannot be necessary to convince the natives that Major Scott Waring, and all who are like-minded with him, have not a *wish* to convert them; and as to others, who may entertain the idea of converting them *without compulsion*, it deserves to be considered whether the recalling of them would not have a contrary effect to that which is pretended. The recall of the Missionaries, and the virtual suppression of the scriptures, would furnish the natives with an important subject of reflection. It would be a tacit acknowledgment on the part of government, that, till instructed by the Vellore mutiny, they *had* entertained "the wild idea of compelling them to embrace Christianity;" but that *now* they have become sober, and relinquished it! Whether such a measure would be attributed to *respect* or to *fear*, and what effects it would produce on the army and the country, let common sense determine.

As the main design of this preface was to excite "His Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company, and the Legislature," against the Missionaries and their labours, the author having improved the Vellore mutiny as far as he is able, proceeds to denounce these men, and all who have been in any way abettors of their dangerous designs. *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, who have aided them as translators; Mr. Brown and Dr. Buchanan, who have encouraged them; and Dr. Kerr, who is engaged in the same cause with them, all come in for a share of his censures.

"Dr. Buchanan conceives," says he, "that it is by no means submitted *to our judgment, or to our notions of policy*, whether we shall embrace the means of imparting Christian knowledge to our subjects, or not." (p. xxv.) The Major probably thinks this a very wild opinion: yet it only amounts to this, that God is greater than man, and that what respects the promotion of his kingdom in the earth, must not be rendered subservient to worldly interests. But this, he tells us, "was precisely the doctrine of the Spaniards and Portuguese, when they discovered the new world; and they extirpated millions of unfortunate men, in prop-

agating their doctrines by the sword." If there be any force in this remark (which seems to be a favourite one) it is because the persecuting conduct of these nations was *the legitimate and necessary consequence* of the doctrine in question. But why might they not have considered themselves as under indispensable obligation to impart the means of Christian knowledge, without being obliged to follow it with persecution? Does it follow, because they were not obliged to extend their religious principles by the sword, that we are not obliged to extend ours without the sword?

Many things are said on the impolicy of Dr. Buchanan's visit to the Syrian Christians, and that of Dr. Kerr to the Malabar coast. It seems to have given this writer serious offence, that the Governor of Madras should have given the epithet "important" to an inquiry relating to Christianity. (p. xxix.) He calls it "the most trifling of all possible subjects connected with the welfare of our oriental empire. (p. xxxiii.) He speaks of this empire as being "conquered by British valour." (p. xl.) God and religion, therefore, it should seem, can have nothing to do with it. No, let the Missionaries go to Africa, to the South Sea Islands, or to the wilds of America; but let them not come hither! *O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.** Yet this gentleman would be thought, after all, to be a Christian, and "trusts it will not be imputed to indifference for the eternal welfare of the people of India," that he advises what he does!

But as Dr. Buchanan, and Dr. Kerr, if they judge it necessary, are able to vindicate themselves, I shall confine my replies to those particulars which more immediately concern me. Many things are said against "the English, and especially the Baptist Missionaries." Such, indeed is the quantity of misrepresentation contained in these few pages, that to correct it, it is often necessary to contradict every sentence. On this account, the reader must frequently dispense with the ordinary forms of quoting

* Amos vii. 12, 13.

and answering: and consider those paragraphs which are marked with reversed commas, as the words of Major Scott Waring, and those which are not as the answers to them. I do not accuse my opponent of wilful errors; but if he be clear of them his information must be extremely incorrect.

"We have now a great number of Sectarian Missionaries spread over every part of India." (p. xii.) Those whom Major Scott Waring is pleased to honour with this appellation, may amount to fifteen or sixteen, the greater part of whom reside at Serampore, near Calcutta, directly under the eye of the supreme government. "Mr. Carey, the head of the Baptist Mission in Bengal, and his assistant Missionaries have been employed, since the year 1804, in translating the scriptures into the various languages of India." It may have been from that period that the work of translating has been conducted on so extensive a scale; but for many years before that time Mr. Carey was engaged in the same undertaking. An edition of the New Testament in Bengalee, was printed at Serampore in 1801, a copy of which is now in his Majesty's library. "Mr. Carey is employed in translating the scriptures into the *Chinese* language." (p. xv.) The Chinese translation is not the work of Mr. Carey, but of Mr. Johannes Lassar, a learned Arminian Christian, with other assistants. "As the different parts are translated, they are printed, as I understand at the *Company's press*, attached to the College at Calcutta." If this were true, while no man is forced to read them, no danger could arise from it: but there is very little, if any, truth in it. The translations of the Missionaries have been printed at Serampore. "Specimens of these translations have been sent home by the provost." It seems, then, that they were not engaged in any thing of which they were ashamed. "The natives of India, cannot be ignorant of these novel and extraordinary proceedings:"—Especially while their most learned Pundits assist in the work. "They can form no other conclusion than this, that if we cannot *persuade*, we shall *compel* them to embrace Christianity." So long as no compulsion is used towards them, they have more sense than to draw such conclusions, or even to believe them when drawn for them by others, whom they consider as men *of no religion*.

In 1781, when it was the fixed principle of the Legislature, that we ought never to *interfere* with the religion, laws, or native customs of the people of India, a proposition for *free-schools* and *Christian Missionaries* could not have been listened to." (p. xiii.) There never was a period, since the British have had footing in India, in which either free-schools, or Christian Missionaries were considered as an *interference* with the religious opinions of the natives. If they were, why were Schwartz and his cotemporaries tolerated? The truth is, the term "interference" has been adopted in this controversy to answer an end, and the idea which our adversaries endeavour to attach to it is altogether novel.

"The late Bishop of St. Asaph, a sound and orthodox divine, and one of the main pillars of our good old Church of England, deprecated all such interference." He did so; and Major Scott Waring, with his *men of sense, observation and character*, has, doubtless, in his Lordship's decease, lost an able advocate. "The command of our Saviour to his apostles, to preach the gospel to all nations, did not, as he conceived, apply to us—and his opinion in 1781, was universal," Major Scott Waring may know that this was the opinion of the late Bishop of St. Asaph; but he knows very little indeed of what were the opinions of the Christian world. "Since that period many very worthy and good men are of opinion, that, as Christians, it is incumbent upon us to spread the Christian religion as widely as we possibly can; and highly, indeed, do I applaud their zeal, when it is exercised in countries where *we* have no political power." Whatever charges we may exhibit against Major Scott Waring, we cannot accuse him of not speaking out.

"I do not exactly know what are Baptist Missionaries. I believe they may be classed with Calvinistic Methodists, to distinguish them from the Arminian Methodists." (p. xv.) We can excuse the author's ignorance on this subject: but when he tells us, in the same page, that there are "spread over India, Baptist Missionaries, Arminian Methodists, and United Brethren Missionaries," &c. &c. we see ignorance combined with something worse. The Arminian Methodists have no mission in India, and never had. The United Brethren have formerly had one at Serampore; but, I

believe at present, they have none. Before this gentleman writes again, he would do well to consider the justness of a remark made by himself, and to apply it to other subjects, as well as politics: "In discussing political questions, a certain degree of acquaintance with the subject is supposed to be requisite." (p. 38.)

"I am assured by gentlemen lately returned from India, that notwithstanding the very great increase of Missionaries of late years the case is not changed since my time; that they have not made a single Mahomedan convert, and that the few Hindoos who have been converted, were men of the most despicable character, who had lost their casts, and took up a new religion because they were excommunicated." (p. xlii.) I presume these *gentlemen lately returned from India*, are the same persons whom this writer elsewhere denominates *men of sense, observation, and character*. The reader will now be able to judge of the value of these boasted authorities. EVERY PARTICULAR IN THIS PARAGRAPH IS FALSE. There has been no such great increase of Missionaries of late years, as is pretended. There are Mahometans as well as Hindoos, who have been baptised. Out of more than eighty natives, who had been baptised, before May 25, 1806, only *three* had previously lost cast, *eight* were brahmans, and *seven* Mahometans. The whole number which had been *excluded* for immoral conduct, might amount to *eight or nine*. As nearly as I can make it out, the above is a true statement. The reader may see a list of the baptised down to Nov. 1804, in No. XV. Periodical Accounts. (Pref. p. xiv.) I can assure him, that the Missionaries might have had more proselytes than they have, if they would have received such characters as these men report them to have received; but their object is to make *converts to Christ*, and not proselytes to themselves. Indeed, so little are the assertions of this writer to be regarded, with respect to the character of the native converts, that it would be the easiest thing imaginable directly to confront them by the testimony of competent witnesses. Mr. J. Fernandez, a gentleman who came from India, early in 1806, and who is now with Dr. Ryland at Bristol, makes the following declaration—"There are several Mahomedan converts among the Missionaries, and some very respectable Hindoos who have embraced Chris-

tianity. To the best of my recollection, there are but two at Serampore who had previously lost cast: these had been for a long time reckoned Portuguese, and were not in worse circumstances than other people. Some of the highest class of brahmans have, to my knowledge, embraced the gospel, whom the natives call Mookoorja, Chattirja, Barridja," &c. As to what is said of their non-success, either by Major Scott Warring, or *the gentlemen lately returned from India*, I appeal to the common sense of mankind, whether, if they themselves believed what they say, they would raise such an opposition as they do. They tell us the natives are alarmed; but the alarm is with themselves. It is somewhat remarkable, that Infidelity, which has of late years threatened to swallow up Christianity, should in so short a time be alarmed for itself, and for its Pagan and Mahometan allies. A small detachment from the Christian army, clad in the armour of God, and operating as in a way of diversion, has caused their host to tremble, and to cry out to the civil powers to assist them by recalling these men!

This gentleman is sufficiently aware of the prejudice which exists against *Protestant Dissenters*, and knows how to avail himself of it. He can condescend to call the Missionaries *sectaries* and *schismatics*. (pp. xliii—xlv.) And would he have liked them better if they had been Churchmen? No, for he speaks of certain gentlemen, as "classed under that description of our clergy who are termed *evangelical*," and of their being all for "converting the Hindoos to Christianity." (p. xv.) Clergymen of this description are, in his account, as bad as sectaries and schismatics. The truth is, it is *as Christians* that we incur his displeasure; only he judges it prudent to attack us under other names.

But these Missionaries are also represented as "illiterate, ignorant, and as enthusiastic as the wildest devotees among the Hindoos." (p. xliv.) The following extract from the speech of Sir George Barlow, published in a Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary, on Saturday, March 8, 1806, will prove that all men are not of Major Scott Waring's opinion. "I have received with great satisfaction, the information, that, *under the patronage of the Asiatic Society*, the society of Protestant Missionaries at the Danish settle-

ment of Serampore, aided and superintended by the abilities of Mr. Carey, Professor of the Shanscrit and Bengalee languages, has undertaken the translation of some of the most ancient and authentic works of literature in the former of these languages."

Of the Missionaries sent out by the London Society, I do not believe there is an individual who is either "*ignorant* or *illiterate;*" though, doubtless, as in all other bodies of men, there are diversities of talent and learning. And with respect to *enthusiasm*, after what has been quoted from Major Scott Waring, no Christian need be offended at his calling him an enthusiast.

This gentleman has furnished himself with various reports from the Missionary Societies. Among others, he has met with a *Sermon*, preached in May last, before *The Society of Missions to Africa*, AND THE EAST, of which Society Admiral Lord Gambier is a Governor. It seems then, that India is not *altogether* "thrown into the hands of schismatics." But at the end of this sermon is an account of a brahman, as given by Mr. John Thomas, in the Baptist Periodical Accounts. (Vol. I. pp. 22—26.) Let any one that fears God read that account, and compare it with these remarks upon it. "I had the curiosity," says he, "to inquire after Mr. Thomas, and his convert, and I heard that they both died raving mad in Bengal." (p. xlvi.) We may suppose this information, as well as the preceding, was received from *the gentlemen lately returned from India*. It is worthy of them. Parbotee, however, is neither dead nor insane. And Mr. Thomas, though his mind was deranged for a month or two, at one period of his life, yet died sane and happy. Mr. John Fernandez, the gentleman before referred to, says, "Mr. Thomas was deranged for a short time; and after his recovery, lived with my father at Dinagepore, for a considerable time before his dissolution, when he died very happy. As for Parbotee, I am almost certain that he is still alive. He was so, however, when I left India, in 1806. I saw him myself."

It is remarkable that this gentleman is for tolerating the Roman Catholic Missionaries, and all others, indeed, except "*those who possess this new mania for conversion*, so unaccountably taken up." (p. xlix.) We perfectly comprehend him; and, I hope, shall profit by the hint. It signifies but little with him how many Missiona-

ries there are, nor by what names they are called, so that they are *not in earnest for the salvation of men.* We will follow his example:—while we adhere to that denomination which appears to us to approach nearest to the scriptures, we will recognize *the Christian*, in whatever communion we may find him. We will rejoice in the good which is done by *the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, even though they are offended with their Missionaries for nothing, that we can conceive, but their exercising the common duties of hospitality to ours.*

Major Scott Waring, among other Missionary Reports, has procured No. XVI. of the Baptist Periodical Accounts, and proposes giving us some "extracts" from it. Before he does this, however, he presents us with a few particulars, by way of introduction; but all as the reader would suppose, gathered from this said No. XVI. First, he informs us that "*Nine* English Missionaries are employed by this Society *in Bengal alone.*" (p. liii.) What a number, then, must they employ, the reader would suppose, in all the other provinces of India! It happens, however, that in no other province of Hindôstan have they ever employed a single Missionary. Whether *the gentlemen lately returned from India* informed the author of the great numbers of these Missionaries scattered all over the country, or however he came by the idea, his mind is certainly full of it, and it has led him into a curious train of reasoning. "The jealousy and the alarm," says he, "which has pervaded the whole of the Carnatic and Mysore, has been but partially felt in Bengal, because [there] the efforts of the English Missionaries have hitherto not extended beyond a few inconsiderable villages, and the populous city of Dacca." (p. li.) They have been more extensive, then, it should seem, in the Carnatic and Mysore! The truth is, I believe that NOT AN ENGLISH MISSIONARY HAS ENTERED

* See the last Report of the Committee of this Society, No. IV. p. 165. They acknowledge the documents they possess to be *quite insufficient* to enable them to form a judgment of the true ground of certain disorders; but "Missionaries from an Anabaptist Society, and from that called the London Missionary Society," have called upon them, and, it seems, received some countenance from them; and therefore this Committee thinks proper to throw out a suspicion, that *they may have been the occasion of these evils!*

EITHER OF THESE COUNTRIES. Nearly the whole of what has been hitherto done, is confined to Bengal; for though the London Society has *five* or *six* Missionaries in other provinces, some of which may be near to the Carnatic, yet the time is so short, that they have scarcely been able, at present, to acquire the languages. But in Bengal the Baptist Mission has existed for a number of years, and the labours of the Missionaries have been much more extensive than our author would seem, in this instance to apprehend: yet there these "alarms have been but partially felt!" Who does not perceive the consequence? THESE ALARMS ARE NOT THE EFFECT OF MISSIONARY EXERTIONS.

Major Scott Waring goes on to inform his readers of a number of particulars, in a manner as though he had collected them from our own Report. Among other things, he speaks of Mr. Carey as "having apartments in the College *for the reception of his brother Missionaries, when they visit Calcutta*," and repeats the story of "Mr. Thomas, and his convert Parbotee, dying mad in Bengal." (p. liii.) Did he learn these particulars from No. XVI, or from the *gentlemen lately returned from India?* It were singular indeed, if a professor in a college had no apartments in it, and were not at liberty to receive any person who may call upon him.

"In the Company's list of college officers he is styled Mr. William Carey; but the Bible Society have given him the dignified title of *Reverend*." (p. liii.) He might be called *Doctor* Carey, or *Professor* Carey. Whether either of these titles would be less displeasing to this gentleman, I cannot tell. If not, whenever he has occasion to correspond with him, he may lay aside all titles, and call him, as I do, *Mr. Carey*. I can answer for it that it will give him no offence.

As to the attempts to prove from the Missionaries' own accounts, that they have "caused considerable *uneasiness* among the people of the villages," Major Scott Waring may make what he can of them. If he had given *extracts*, as he proposed, and referred to the pages, it would have appeared that no such sensation was ever produced *with respect to government*. It was confined, as Mr. Carey says, "to abusive language from a few loose persons;" or, at most, to ill treatment of the native converts, and which, in every

instance, they have borne with Christian meekness and patience. No such thing as a disturbance, endangering the peace of society, has occurred. The "alarm" which the appearance of a European is allowed to excite, (p. lviii.) respects him not as a Missionary, but *as a European;* and it is for the purpose of avoiding this, as much as possible, that the labours of the native converts are encouraged. This writer seems to think it sufficient to discredit all Missionary attempts, that he can prove, from our own accounts, that we have strong prejudices to encounter, and judge it expedient, instead of violently attacking them, to proceed in as still and silent a way as possible.

A very heavy charge is preferred against one of the Missionaries, as having *perverted* the words of our Lord: *Think you that I am come to send peace on the earth? I tell you nay.* Yet nothing is alleged to prove it a perversion, except that the gospel inculcates the mild doctrine of *peace on earth, and good will to men.* (p. lix.) The *direct* influence of the gospel is, no doubt, what he says of it; but what if, owing to the depravity of men, it should, in many instances, *occasion* the most bitter enmity and opposition? Is the gospel accountable for this? Christian compassion has been known to excite the foulest resentment in some men. What then? Is Christian compassion ever the worse?

The remarks on the journey to Dacca, (pp. liv. lv.) show what Major Scott Waring *wishes* to prove; but that is all. If what he calls "the proper line for the British government to pursue," had been pursued on that occasion, the young men had not been interrupted. I say the *young men;* for it was not Mr. Carey, but Mr. *William* Carey, his second son, who accompanied Mr. Moore. "They distinguished," we are told, "between the brahmans, and the people at large." Yes, they had reason to do so; for the people were eager to receive the tracts, but some of the brahmans were offended; and this is common on almost all other occasions. "Should we be mad enough to make the same distinction, our destruction is inevitable." One would think, then, the destruction of the Missionaries themselves would not only be inevitable, but immediate. As the brahmans are displeased with none but them and the native converts, if *they* escape, there is no cause for others

to fear. The truth is, the common people are not so under the influence of the brahmans as to be displeased with hearing them publicly confuted. On the contrary, they will often express their pleasure at it; and when the latter remain silent, will call out, 'Why do you not answer him?' But "Lord Clive and Mr. Verelst, in the year 1766, were not so mad as to advise a poor creature who had lost cast to abandon his ridiculous and idolatrous prejudices, and to embrace the true religion." (p. lvi.) If I were to say, they were not so wise and so good as to do so, I should be as near the truth; and my saying would bear reflection in a dying hour, quite as much as that of Major Scott Waring.

"We may conceive the narrow *bigotry* by which these men are actuated, by the conduct of Mr. [William] Carey, and Mr. Moore, to some native Christian Catholics, whom they met with in a village, when they were driven from Dacca by the Magistrate and Collector?" And what was it? Why, "to these poor Catholics, they pointed out the *errors of Popery*, and warned them of the danger of *worshipping* and trusting to *idols*." (p. lx.) And this is *bigotry!* Such bigots they certainly were and are.

To prove the absolute inutility of the dispersion of one edition of the New Testament, and of twenty thousand religious tracts, a letter from Mr. Carey is cited, which speaks of their being "but few months in which *some* were not baptised; of *three* natives having joined them the last month, and *two* the month before; but of their being under the necessity of excluding *several for evil conduct*." (p. lx.) If Major Scott Waring be not more successful in his opposition than he is in his *proof*, Christianity may still go on and prosper in India. I suspect it was from a conscious want of this important article, that he was obliged to fill up his pages with such terms as "bigots," "madmen," "mischievous madmen," &c. &c. There is nothing so provoking to a man who is desirous of proving a point, as the want of evidence.

In the course of several years, they have made about eighty converts, all from the lowest of the people, most of them beggars by profession, and others who have lost their casts. The whole of them were rescued from poverty, and procured a comfortable subsistance by their conversion." (p. xli.) That is, reader, thus

say *the gentlemen lately returned from India.* (p. xlii.) I need not repeat the refutation of these falsehoods. Before they were said all to have previously lost cast: but now it seems to be only some of them. Judge, reader, do these men believe what they say? But "the whole of them were rescued from poverty, and procured a comfortable subsistence by their conversion," A considerable number of the Christian natives live many miles from Serampore, and subsist in the same manner as they did before their baptism, and without any aid from the Missionaries. The subsistence of others, who reside in the neighbourhood of Serampore, is from the same employment as it was before they became Christians; and those who receive pay from the Missionaries are such as are employed by them. Mr. John Fernandez says, "I have been present almost every time when the converts have professed their faith before the brethren, and have repeatedly heard the Missionaries tell them, that unless they worked with their own hands, they would receive no help from them. Inquirers were always kept for some time on probation. Some of them were Byraggees, a sort of religious beggars: but they are no longer so when they become Christians. No one is supported in idleness. If any are bettered in their circumstances, it is by being taught to be industrious and frugal. But many of those whom our author calls "beggars by profession," lived in a much greater fulness by that way of life, than they do now by labour; and it is not very likely that they should have relinquished the one and chosen the other, from interested motives. What is it that kindles the wrath of this man? If a word be spoken against the character of these people while they continue heathens, he is all indignant: but if they become Christians, the foulest reproaches are heaped upon them. It is because these beggars are become industrious, and cease to live upon the superstitious credulity of their neighbours, that he is so offended? Does he think the British Government would be overturned, if all the rest of the beggars were to follow their example?

But "one of the Missionaries writes to England, that a hundred rupees a month, would support ten native converts with their families, and a still greater number of single brethren; which,

he says, is undoubtedly true, because the wages of our common servants are but three, four, and five rupees a month." (p. lxi, lxii.) Why does not our author refer to the pages from whence he takes his extracts? As this passage stands in his pamphlet, it conveys the idea that *every native convert with a family*, costs the Society ten rupees a month: but if the reader look into No. XVI. p. 171, from whence the extract is taken, he will find, that it is of native *preachers* that Mr. Marshman writes; who observes, that "while they are thus employed in disseminating the good seed, they cannot be at home supporting their families." It is one thing, surely, to pay a man ten rupees for the support of his family, and his own travelling expenses; and another, to give him the same sum as a common labourer at home.

Major Scott Waring may give as many extracts from our publication as he pleases; but he should not pervert the meaning. He may think us wild and foolish to lay out money in such undertakings; he may call it "*ridiculous* to talk of the perishing millions of India; (p. lxii.) he may reckon compassion to a great city, wholly given to idolatry, a proof of the want of *common sense;* (p. lxv.) but let him do us the justice of allowing us to think otherwise. We are not surprised at his having no compassion for perishing idolaters, nor indeed, at any thing else, unless it be his pretending, after all, to be a Christian; but let him not represent us as employed in bribing bad men to become hypocrites.

"Some of these converts have been expelled for gross immorality." True, and what then? "Such I am confident would be the fate of the remainder, were not the Missionaries afraid of being laughed at." But why should he imagine this? Does he think the Hindoos *all* bad men; or do they become such when they embrace Christianity? And why should the missionaries be supposed to retain bad men in their society, for fear of being *laughed at!* Had they feared this, they had never engaged in the work. Did they fear this, they would not exclude so many as they do; or, at least, would not report it in their letters. I may add, it is not long since they had a fair opportunity to have entire-

ly *desisted* from their work ; and that in a way that would not have incurred the laughter, but possibly the commendation of these men. They might also from that time have gone on to accumulate fortunes, instead of sacrificing every thing in a cause which they knew, it seems at the same time to be hopeless. Surely these Missionaries must be worse than madmen ; and the government at Calcutta, and the Asiatic Society, cannot be much better, to think of employing them in translating works of literature.

Once more, "The new orders of Missionaries are the most ignorant and the most bigoted of men. Their compositions are, in fact, nothing but puritanical rant, of the most vulgar kind ; worse than that so much in fashion, in Great Britain, during the days of Oliver Cromwell." We hope the author will furnish us with a specimen. Yes, here it is: "When Mr. [W.] Carey, and Mr. Moore were at Dacca, they write on the Lord's-day as follows: *What an awful sight have we witnessed this day! A large and populous city wholly given to idolatry, and not an individual to warn them to flee from the wrath to come. As soon as we rose in the morning, our attention was unavoidably excited by scenes the most absurd, disgusting, and degrading to human nature!*" Judge, Christian reader, what a state of mind that man must possess, who can call this language *vulgar rant*, and adduce it as a proof of *ignorance* and *bigotry!* "Could men possessing common sense," he adds, "have written such nonsense as this is, unless blinded by enthusiasm? Had they discovered, that a single Englishman was a convert to the Hindoo, or the Mahometan religion, they would have been justified in giving their sentiments *to him*, as to his apostacy from the true, to a false and idolatrous religion ; but to pour out such unmeaning and useless abuse on an immense population, which merely observed those forms and ceremonies, which had been used throughout Hindostan for above two thousand years, is folly and arrogance in the extreme." (p. lxv.) I wonder whether this writer ever read a book, called the Bible, or heard of any of its languages, excepting a few passages held up, perchance, to ridicule, in some history of the times of Oliver

Cromwell! I presume the reader has had enough: and as all that follows is little else than a repetition of what has already been answered, interlarded with the usual quantity of low abuse, I shall pass it over unnoticed. I have seldom seen a performance, by a writer calling himself a *Christian* so full of bare-faced Infidelity. May God give him repentance to the acknowledging of the truth!

AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE LATE

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TO INDIA;

PART THE SECOND.

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON MAJOR SCOTT WARING'S LETTER TO THE REV. MR. OWEN,

AND ON A

"VINDICATION OF THE HINDOOS,

'BY A BENGAL OFFICER."

We certify the king that if this city be builded, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side of the river.

THE ADVERSARIES OF JUDAH.

Now Tatnai, Governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God alone.

DARIUS.

INTRODUCTION.

THAT Apologies for Christianity should have been necessary in heathen countries, is easily conceived: but an attempt of the kind in this country, and at this period of time, seems itself almost to require an apology. Who would have thought that the sons of Protestant Britain would so far degenerate as to become the advocates of Paganism; or though that were the case with a few individuals, yet who could have imagined that a number of men would be found who would have either the power or the resolution publicly to oppose the propagation of Christianity?

We may be told that the greater part of our opponents profess to be Christians, and that their opposition is merely on *political* considerations. I might meet them upon this ground, and might deny that the progress of the gospel in any country, or in any circumstances, can be unfriendly to its political welfare. But it would be compromising the honour of the gospel to rest its defence on this principle. If Christianity be true, it is of such importance that no political considerations are sufficient to weigh against it; nor ought they, for a moment, to be placed in competition with it. If Christianity be true, it is of God; and if it be of God, to oppose its progress on the grounds of political expediency, is the same thing as to tell our Maker that we will not have him to reign over us, unless his government be subservient to our temporal interests.

Should we be reminded that we are fallible men, and ought not to identify our undertakings with Christianity, nor to reckon every opposition to us as an opposition to Christ: this we readily admit. If we be opposed in relation to any other object than that of propagating the gospel, or on account of any thing *faulty* in us in the pursuit of that object, such opposition is not

directed against Christianity, and we have no desire, in such cases, to identify our undertakings with it. Let it only be fairly proved, that the Missionaries are *intemperate and dangerous men*, and we will admit the propriety of their being recalled. But if no such proof be given, if the reports circulated against them be unfounded, if the alarms which have been spread in India be the mere fabrications of evil-minded Europeans, and if they themselves be men who work the work of God, an opposition to them may be found to be an opposition to Christ.

Let our adversaries, instead of declaiming against us, join issue with us on this point. Let them prove the Missionaries to be *intemperate and dangerous men*, and their cause is gained.

We have only one petition to present to our judges; which is, *that such effects as naturally arise from the preaching of the gospel among those who do not believe it, which always have arisen, even from the first preaching of the apostles down to our own times, and which terminate only on ourselves, may not be admitted in evidence against us.* Our adversaries allege, that, according to our own accounts, the Missionaries occasionally excite *uneasiness*, and that the native Christians sometimes draw upon themselves *abusive* treatment. We do not deny that in a few instances this has been the case; but we say this effect is no more than what Christianity has always produced, in a greater or less degree, when addressed to unbelievers; and that so long as this uneasiness and abuse are merely directed against the parties, and are no more injurious to the British government, than the preaching of Paul and Barnabas was to that of Rome, we ought not, on this account, to be censured. And if a few things of this kind be thrown aside as irrelevant, we have no apprehension of a single charge being substantiated against us.

REMARKS

ON

MAJOR SCOTT WARING'S LETTER

TO THE

REV. MR. OWEN.

THERE is a sympathy between kindred principles which is often unperceived by the party who favours them, but which may be expected to betray itself in speaking or writing upon the subject. How is it that our opponents are so anxious for the preservation of Paganism and Mahometanism? They certainly have no intention of becoming the disciples of either, nor to convey any such idea to the public: but when these systems are in danger, they have a feeling for them which they cannot conceal. How is it that Major Scott Waring should so readily find mottos for his pamphlets in *Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effect of Evangelical Preaching?* He professes to be no *sectary*, but a true orthodox Churchman, believing in the doctrine of the Trinity; nay more, considering the belief of that doctrine as the only thing essential to Christianity. (p. 107.) Yet the author of these "Hints," if report be true, while he calls himself "a Barrister," is, in reality, a *Socinian dissenter:* but, being *so exactly of his mind with respect to evangelical religion*, his wanting what he accounts the only essential of Christianity, is a matter of small account.

Finally: How is it that the cause of our opponents should be favoured in most of the *Socinian* publications, and that they should be so happily united in their wishes for government not to tolerate *evangelical religion?* One submits "A Plan, to his Majesty's Ministers, the East India Company, and the Legislature," proposing to "recall every English Missionary;" another suggests "Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effect of Evangelical Preaching." The language of both is, 'We know not what to do with these evangelical men, and therefore humbly request GOVERNMENT to take them in hand!' Yet these are the men who would be thought the friends, and almost the only friends of reason and toleration!

If the Major and his new ally have been accused of dealing too much in *reason*, we answer with Dr. Owen, They have been unjustly treated; as much so as poor St. Hierome, when beaten by an angel for preaching in a Ciceronean style.

So much for the motto. As to the Letter itself, it contains little more than a repetition of things which have no foundation in truth, and which, I trust, have been already answered. The Major having been so ably repulsed in his first object of attack, *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, may be expected to direct his force somewhat more pointedly against the Missionaries. We have his whole strength, however, in his former Preface. No new facts are adduced, nor new arguments from the old ones: almost all is repetition. Thus he repeats the base calumnies, of our bribing beggars to become Christians; and of our sending out thousands a year to support them; of our not having made one good convert; of the converts having lost cast before they were baptised, &c. (pp. 32. 87.) And thus, seven times over, he has repeated the words of Mr. Marshman, on "an alarm being excited in a bigoted city by the appearance of an European Missionary," which, after all, respects him not *as a Missionary*, but merely as a European. The scope of Mr. Marshman's argument proves this: for he is recommending native Missionaries, who, in conversing with their own countrymen, are listened to

with attention, and excite none of that fear and reserve which are produced by the appearance of a foreigner.*

If the *reviling* conduct of the inhabitants of a certain village, towards the Missionaries or native converts, (who bore all without resistance,) proves the fault to have been with them, it will prove the same of other Missionaries whom our author professes to respect, and of other native converts. If he will look into the Report of *The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, for 1804, he will see an account "an extraordinary conversion of several thousands, and of an extraordinary and unexpected *persecution* of the converts from their heathen neighbours, and particularly from some *men in office under the Collector*." (p. 145.) Moreover, it will prove that the apostle Paul and our Saviour were accountable for the *uneasiness* which their preaching excited among the Jews, and for the persecutions which they met with on account of it. We may be told, indeed that we ought not to compare ourselves with Christ and his apostles; and it is true, that in various respects, it would be highly improper to do so: but in things which are common to Christ and his followers, it is very proper. Now this is the case in the present instance. The disciples of Christ were given to expect that their doctrine would draw upon them the displeasure of unbelievers, in the same manner as that of Christ had done before them. *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*† If Major Scott Waring had known any thing of the gospel, and of its opposition to the vicious inclinations of the human heart, he could not have stumbled in the manner he has, at Mr. Ward's application of the words of our Saviour, in Luke vii. 51. He had introduced them before, and now he introduces them again and again. (pp. 80. 99.) *Suppose ye that I am come to send peace on the earth? I tell you, Nay.* "These words," he says, "most evidently considered with their context, apply to the destruction of Jerusalem, which our blessed Saviour predicted would happen before the generation then existing had

* See Periodical Accounts, No. XVI. p. 170. † John xv. 20.

passed away." So then, Christ came to set fire to Jerusalem! But how was it *already kindled*. Almost any commentator would have taught him that these words have no reference to Jewish wars, but to Christian persecutions, which were predicted to take place at the same time. Neither do they express, as I have said before, what was the direct tendency of the gospel, which is doubtless to produce love and peace, but that of which, through man's depravity, it would be the *occasion*. In this sense Mr. Ward applied the text, in order to account for the persecution which the native converts met with; and I should not have supposed that a man of Major Scott Waring's age and talents could have construed it into a suggestion that the natural tendency of the gospel is to produce division.

The Major proposes to the Rev. Mr. Owen, that they should "preserve the manners of gentlemen in arguing the question." (p. 4.) Is it then becoming to the pen of a gentlemen to write as he has done of Mr. Thomas, and the other Missionaries ?* Or

* Having lately received a letter from a gentleman of respectability in Scotland, concerning the calumny on the memory of Mr. Thomas, I shall take the liberty of introducing it in this place, as a farther vindication of this injured character.

"Dear Sir,

"An anonymous pamphlet* has this day fallen into my hands, which is ascribed to a gentleman who formerly held a high rank in the East India Company's military service, and of which it is the principal object to induce the East India Company to expel every Protestant Missionary from the possessions, and to prevent the circulation of the scriptures in the native languages.

"Among the numerous and virulent misrepresentations which this work contains, there is a most false and scandalous aspersion of the character of the late Mr. Thomas, who was the first Missionary of your Society in India, which, from my personal acquaintance with that gentleman, I am enabled to contradict in the most positive manner, and which, from my regard for his memory, I deem it my duty so to contradict.

"The author asserts, in p. 46, and again in p. 51, of the preface, that Mr. Thomas *died raving mad in Bengal*. It is indeed true, that Mr. Thomas was once afflicted with a temporary derangement; but it was a considerable time before his death. From the summer of 1796, till May 1801, I held an official

* Major Scott Waring's Observations, &c.

does he think himself at liberty, when dealing with *them*, to put off that character? If his own motives be arraigned, or his Christianity suspected, he thinks himself rudely treated; yet, when speaking of men who secede from the Established Church, he can allow himself to insinuate that they do not act from principle. (p. 58.)

situation in the Company's civil service at Dinagepore; and during the last six months of this period, I had very frequent intercourse with Mr. Thomas, and heard him preach almost every Sunday: and I most solemnly affirm, that I never saw the least symptom of derangement in any part of his behaviour or conversation. On the contrary, I considered him as a man of good understanding, uncommon benevolence, and solid piety.

"In May 1801, I quitted Dinagepore, and never again saw Mr. Thomas; but I had more than one letter from him, between that time and his death, which happened, I think, in October, the same year. These letters, which are still in my possession, exhibit no signs whatever of mental derangement. In the last of them he wrote (with the calmness and hope of a Christian) of his own dissolution; an event which he thought was near at hand, as he felt some internal symptoms of the formation of a polypus in his heart.

"After Mr. Thomas's decease, I had an opportunity of learning the circumstances of it, from the late Mr. Samuel Powel, a person whose veracity none who knew him could question; and I never had the smallest reason to believe or suspect that Mr. Thomas was, in any degree whatever, deranged in mind at the time of his death. On the contrary, I always understood that he died in possession of his faculties, and of that hope which nothing but an unshaken faith in the gospel of Christ can give.

"It is not my present purpose to vindicate *the living*, from the coarse and vulgar abuse of this anonymous author. This you have undertaken, and are well qualified to do: but, as he has thought it necessary to insult the character of *the dead*, and wound the feelings of surviving friends; and as I am, perhaps, the only person now in Great Britain, who can, from personal acquaintance with Mr. Thomas during the last year of his life, do any thing to rescue his memory from this unmerited insult, I should think it criminal to have remained silent on this occasion. And I am happy thus to make some return for the instructions I received from Mr. Thomas as a minister of Christ, and the pleasure I frequently enjoyed in his society and conversation.

"You are at liberty to make any use of this letter that you may think proper.

"Believe me to be,

"Dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

"WILLIAM CUNINGHAME."

Glasgow, Jan. 15, 1808.

As to the charges of "ignorance and bigotry," which he is continually ringing in our ears, I refer to the answers already given in my Strictures. It is allowed, that "Mr. Carey may be a good oriental scholar, and a good man; but he is narrow-minded and intemperate." (p. 33.) The proof of this is taken from the conduct of his *son* at Dacca. The mistake as to the person is excusable: but what was there in the conduct of either of the young men on that occasion, which showed them to be narrow-minded or intemperate? They felt, though they were not apostles, for a great city wholly given to idolatry; for they had read in their Bibles that "idolators cannot enter the kingdom of God." This was narrowness! But when Major Scott Waring proposes to exclude all denominations of Christian Missionaries from India, except those of the Established Church, I suppose he reckons this consistent with liberality.*

With regard to *intemperateness*, I know of nothing like it in the conduct of these junior Missionaries. They gave away tracts to those who came to their boat for them, and wished to have taken a stand in the city for the like purpose: but, being interrupted, they retured home; not declining, however, to do that which had been done for years without offence, during the administration of Marquis Wellesley; namely, to distribute tracts in the villages. As to the Marquis Cornwallis, or any other person, being absent from Calcutta, it had just as much influence in causing their journey, as Major Scott Waring's being at the same time, perchance, at Peterborough House.

But their language is *cant*. The Major, however, might find plenty of such cant in the communications of Schwartz and his colleagues, to *The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, if he would only look over the East India Intelligence in their Reports. These, he tells us, were Missionaries in his time, and of them he approves: yet if their letters were printed in our accounts, they

*Such is the notion of *liberality* and *toleration* which I ventured to denounce in my Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company; and I wish I were able to draw the serious attention of every friend to religious liberty in Britain to the subject. These men talk of liberty, while they are razing it to its foundation.

would equally fall under his censure. The truth is, the language of a serious mind, formed on scriptural principles, will always sound like cant in the ears of such men as this author.

Major Scott Waring makes a curious distinction between a *gratuitous circulation* of the scriptures, and a *giving them to petitioners*. The former he opposes; but to the latter, he says, "no Christian can object." (p. 48.) Wherein then consists the mighty difference? In the one case they are offered for acceptance, if the party please; in the other, the party himself makes the application: but in neither is there any thing done, but with his full consent. No difference exists as to the effects; for if an individual petition for a New Testament, as soon as the brahmans or other interested persons come to know it, they will be just as uneasy, and as likely to *revile* him, as if he had received it without petitioning. But, I suppose, Major Scott Waring may think that if nothing were done, except in consequence of applications from the natives, nothing in effect would be done, and this would please him! After all, I question whether the greater part of the New Testaments which have been distributed, have not been given as "a dole of charity to *petitioners*." An indiscriminate distribution would be throwing them away: it is therefore an object with the Missionaries to give Testaments only to persons who *desire* them, and who are, therefore, likely to read them. So I hope we shall please better as we understand one another.

It seems to grieve the Major, that Christians of almost all denominations are united against him; but he and his colleagues have to thank themselves for this. Had their attack been directed merely against a few Dissenters, they might have had some chance of succeeding: but it is so broad, that no man who has any feeling for Christianity, can view it in any other light, than an attempt to *crush it in our Eastern possessions*. It is an attempt to stop the progress of the Bible; and therefore must be absolutely Antichristian. Whether Major Scott Waring perceives his error in this respect, and wishes to repair it, or whatever be his motive, he certainly labours in this, his second performance, to divide his opponents. First, he would fain persuade them that he himself is a Christian, which it is very possible he may be in his own esteem:

and secondly, he would be very glad to single out these sectarian Missionaries as the only objects of his dislike. It grieves him sorely that they should have been encouraged by Clergymen. If they would but discard these men, I know not but they might obtain forgiveness for being evangelical. But if not, he will do his utmost to prove that they are not the true sons of the Church. "I never met with *an evangelical Clergyman*," he says, "who had not a tender feeling for those who have deserted the Church of England, though at one time Conformists." Allowing this to be the case, he might have supposed it was for their holding *evangelical principles* in common with themselves, and not on account of their deserting the Church. And whatever feeling they might have towards those Christians who are not of their own communion, it is surely as pardonable as that which this author and his party have toward Mahometans and heathens.

This writer seems to think, that unless the whole population of India were converted, nothing is done. If forty in a year were to embrace Christianity, that is nothing in his account. He should consider, however, that we believe in the immortality of the soul, and in the importance of eternal salvation. We should not think our labour lost, therefore, if we could be the instruments of saving half that number. We know, moreover, that the greatest and most beneficial events to mankind have arisen from small beginnings. Hence we pay no regard to such objections; and even the flouts and sneers of our adversaries are far from discouraging us. We compare them with those of *Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite*, who were grieved exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. *What do these feeble Jews?* said the one: *will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? Even that which they build*, answered the other, *if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.* Yet Nehemiah went on with the work, and the wall was built.

The author still continues to revile Mr. [William] Carey, and Mr. Moore, for what they wrote in their journal at Dacca, calling it "downright nonsense;" and still speaks of them as "ignorant men," on account of it. The reader may see what this nonsense was,

by only turning to *Part I.* p. 242. Reader, can you tell us wherein lies the nonsense of this language? for we are unable to discover it. Major Scott Waring has been told, that, as the language of the young men was taken from the words of scripture, in reviling them he blasphemes the word of God. And what is his answer? As far as I can understand it, it amounts to this: The same things which were very wise in Paul, and in our Saviour, are very foolish in these young men. (p. 89.) But there may come a time when it shall appear, even to this gentleman, that *things* are the same, whether they be in an apostle or in any other man; and that he who reviletli *the words of Christ*, revileth Christ; and he that revileth Christ, revileth him that sent him

REMARKS

ON

"A VINDICATION OF THE HINDOOS.

BY A BENGAL OFFICER."

Since the publications of Messrs. Twining and Scott Waring, another piece has appeared, entitled, *A Vindication of the Hindoos from the Aspersions of The Rev. Claudius Buchanan, M. A.; with a Refutation of the Arguments exhibited in his Memoir on the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India, and the ultimate Civilization of the Natives by their Conversion to Christianity. Also, Remarks on an Address from the Missionaries in Bengal to the Natives of India, condemning their Errors, and inviting them to become Christians. The whole tending to evince the Excellency of the Moral System of the Hindoos, and the Danger of interfering with their Customs or Religion. By a Bengal Officer.*

This production surpasses all that have gone before it. Messrs. Twining and Scott Waring were desirous of being considered as Christians; but if this writer does not formally avow his Infidelity, he takes so little care to disguise it, that no doubt can remain on the subject. After having ascribed the Protestant religion to "reason" rather than revelation; (pp. 9, 10.) pretended that the immortality of the soul was first revealed in Hindostan; (p. 23.) questioned whether Christianity be at all necessary to the improvement of the Indian system of moral ordinances; (p. 11.)

preferred the heathen notions of transmigration to the Christian doctrine of future punishment; (p. 47.) and framed a Geeta of his own in favour of purgatory; (p. 48.) after all this, I say, and much more, he cannot, with any consistency, pretend to be a Christian.*

If he believe in any thing pertaining to religion, beyond the dictates of his own reason, it is in the revelations of his "divine MENU." He is fond of calling these institutes by the name of *scripture*, and reasons from them against our endeavouring to convince and convert the Hindoos. (pp. 15, 16, 22, 23.) It is an unfortunate circumstance, that the Hindoo religion admits of no proselytes: otherwise this writer must, ere now, have been invested with the honour of a *poitou*.

The gentleman complains of his want of "eloquence." (p. 3.) There is, however, in his performance, much that tends to dazzle the mind of the reader. But, as he professes "to decline the factitious aid of false appearances," I shall attend only to facts, and to the reasoning which is founded upon them.

I must also be allowed to confine my remarks to what immediately relates to *the late Christian Missions to India*. With an Ecclesiastical Establishment I have no concern. This much, however, I will say, The treatment of Dr. Buchanan, by this writer, is most indecent. Whatever were the motives of that gentleman, *he* cannot prove them to have been either mercenary or ambitious. Where then is the justice, or candour, of his insinuations? But why do I complain? Candid treatment is not to be expected from an *anonymous* accuser.

This writer's pen appears to have been taken up on occasion of a manuscript falling in his hands, "professing to be a translation of an address to the inhabitants of India, from the Missionaries of Serampore, inviting them to become Christians." (p. 1.) From this address he has given several extracts; and the chief of his remarks, in the first part of his pamphlet, are founded upon it.

* In the last two pages he has put marks of quotation to his own words, and represented them as the reasonings of the Hindoos!

But before he or Major Scott Waring had thus publicly animadverted on a private translation, they should have known a few particulars concerning it. How could they tell whether it was drawn up by the Missionaries? Or, if it were, whether the translation were faithful? I can assure them and the public, that it was *not* written by a European, but by a native; and that the translation is very far from being a *faithful* one. In referring to the first of these circumstances, I do not mean either to disparage the tract or the writer, nor to exempt the Missionaries from having a concern in it. They doubtless approved of it, and printed it, and it was circulated as an address *from them*. All I mean to say on this point is, that some allowance should be made for the style or manner of address, as coming from a Hindoo. At the same time it may be presumed, that no Hindoo would call his own countrymen *barbarians*.

With respect to the *translation*, it was done by a person who did not choose to put his name to it, and apparently with the design of inflaming the minds of the Directors and of Government against the Missionaries. Whether we are to ascribe his errors to this cause, or to ignorance, I shall not determine: but that the most offensive ideas contained in the translation are not in the original, is a fact. Nothing is said in the tract itself about "their books of philosophy;" nor are they said to be "fit for the amusement of children." The Hindoos are not called "barbarians," nor their shasters "the shasters of barbarians," nor are they desired to "abominate them."

I have before me the translation from which this author appears to have taken his extracts, and another by Mr. John Fernandez, a gentleman who is now with Dr. Ryland at Bristol, and who will be answerable for its fidelity. I shall present the reader with the first 21 verses of both, in two opposite columns; and as the 14th, 15th, and 20th verses, are those which contain the supposed offensive passages, I shall give in them the original words in English characters, so that any person who understands the language, may judge of both the translations. I have also authority to say, that any person who can read Bengalee, may have one of the original tracts, by applying to Dr. Ryland.

Translation from which the Vindicator appears to have taken his extracts.

THE MESSENGER OF GLAD TIDINGS.

1. Hear, all ye people of the land, hear with attention, how ye may obtain salvation from hell, hard to escape!

2. No one is able to describe it! the thought of money and riches is vain.

3. All such things are calculated only for this life; let all men observe that this world is not eternal.

4. The enjoyment of all these goods is but for a short time: for at his death no one can take his riches with him.

5. He must resign all his garments, ornaments, and health, to his kindred; for after that he will have no corporeal form.

6. Know all ye people, that after life comes death; and after death, the going to heaven or hell.

7. Unless you are cleansed from evil, you will not go to heaven; ye will be cast headlong into the awful regions of hell.

Translation by Mr. John Fernandez.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

1. Hear, O people of the world, hear with one mind; from hell tremendous, how will you find salvation?

2. None of you are inquiring about these things; incessantly mindful of rupees and cowries.

3. All these things are for this world, this is a transitory world; see, every one.

4. These things are needful only for a short time: after death, riches will never go with you.

5. You will leave these riches, jewels, apparel, behind you: a stop being put to these things, they will be utterly useless.

6. Having once been born, you know you must die: after death you must go either to heaven or hell.

7. Without the pardon of sin you will never go to heaven; but headlong you will fall into the thick gloom of hell.

Vindicator.

8. What sort of place hell is, or what are its torments, no one knows; no one is able to imagine.

9. Hell is full of inevitable sufferings, in the midst of fire never to be extinguished; its extinction will never come to pass.

10. Having fallen into it, brethren, there is then no salvation; its beginning, and its duration are of infinite time.

11. With constant meditation, fear lest hereafter ye fall into this dreadful pit of hell; into that fire which cannot be quenched.

12. Form a remedy, O people, form a remedy; for without a remedy ye shall not obtain salvation.

13. In other sastras there is not any account of salvation; and how many discourses there are upon the rites and ceremonies peculiar to people of different countries.

14. Both Hindoos and Musulmans have many sastras; most of which we have examined.

J. Fernandez.

8. What hell is, what torments there are in it, you know not; therefore you are not concerned.

9. The dreadful hell is full of unquenchable fire; its extinction will never be!

10. Falling therein, brother, there is no deliverance: eternity's bound will only be its beginning!

11. Fear, lest you fall into this dreadful hell. Beware, O beware of this unquenchable furnace!

12. Take refuge in CHRIST, take refuge; without a refuge none will receive salvation.

13. In other shasters there is no news of redemption; they contain so many expressions of national rites and customs.

Hindoo mosolmaner bohoo ache shastor taharboddonto mora ko reenoo bistor.

14. Hindoos and musulmans have many shasters; we have investigated them thoroughly.

Brokritto ooddhar totto naheeka tahay ballyanondo shastro seye oopokott' har neyay.

Vindicator.

15. In none of them are to be found the principles of the true salvation; those your sastras are fit only for the amusement of children, and your books of philosophy are mere fables.

16. Formerly we ourselves had only such sastras; but, having obtained the great sastra, we flung those away.

17. The great sastra of religion contains glad tidings; for in it alone is to be found the way to salvation.

18. The great sastra of religion had not appeared here: sometime since we obtained it, and have now brought it here.

19. Hear, hear, ye people, hear with due attention! Let him who is willing come, and we will cause it to be read.

20. Hereafter do ye and your brethren abominate the discourses of barbarians: the sastras of barbarians contain not the means of salvation.

21. If you and your brethren wish for the means of salvation, be attentive, and hear somewhat of an example, &c.—

J. Fernandez.

15. True search for deliverance (from the wrath to come) there is not in them; children-enticing shasters they are, like fabulous tales.

16. Ours were formerly such kind of shasters; but, finding THE GREAT SHASTER, we threw away the other.

17. This holy book is the good news of salvation; the way of deliverance is in that alone.

18 The holy book was not made known here; sometime ago we received it, now we have brought it hither.

19. Hear ye, hear ye O people, hear with attention! Whosesoever wish it is, come—we will cause you to hear.

Mleech'ho bolee ghrinnâ pache korroho shobbây mleech'ho shastro nôhhë ey tránner oopây.

20. Lest you should hereafter call it the barbarian's (shaster) and should hate it, (this is not the barbarian's shaster but a remedy for your salvation.)

21. A little of its contents we must declare; hear with your mind, if you wish for a remedy.—

The writer of the tract then proceeds to give a sketch of scripture doctrine, &c.

The reader will here perceive, that, instead of calling them barbarians, and telling them to abominate their barbarian shasters and discourses, the Missionaries merely intreat them not to abominate the Bible as being what they term the shaster of the *M'leeches*, or *unclean*; for so they denominate all who are not of the cast. It was on this account that a brahman urged another brahman who had conversed with Mr. Thomas, and thought favourably of him, to go and wash his clothes; for, said he, *he is M'leech*, (or *unclean*,) *if not filthy*. The other replied, that filthy men did filthy deeds; whereas he could never say so of this Englishman, and he would not go and wash his clothes.*

Thus has this tract not only been mistranslated, and its mistranslations largely quoted and descanted upon; but our adversaries have represented its circulation in India as that which must needs have provoked the natives to rise up against the Missionaries. It was this that Major Scott Waring alleged as a reason why he should not have wondered, if they had thrown them into the Ganges.† Yet, when the truth comes to be stated, it appears that the inflammatory passages in the tract have been inserted by some unknown person, *engaged in the same cause with himself*. There is no proof that the tract itself, or any other tract, was ever known to give any such offence to the natives as to cause them to treat the Missionaries ill, either in words or actions. I wonder what these men can think of a cause which requires such means to support it; and whether, when thus detected, they be susceptible of shame, like other men.

It is not enough for them, on the authority of an anonymous manuscript translation, to accuse the Missionaries of calling the natives "barbarians," &c. but Major Scott Waring must add, "This tract has been profusely circulated among the native troops in Bengal." (p. 117.) It is impossible for me, at this distance, to be acquainted with every minute circumstance; but I am almost certain that there is no truth in this statement, and that the Missionaries have never gone among the native troops on any occa-

* See Periodical Accounts, Vol. I. p. 22.

† Observations, *Preface*, p. lxvi

sion. If, however, it be true, let Major Scott Waring prove it. I challenge him to do so by any other testimony than that which, in a great number of instances, has been proved, I presume, to be utterly unworthy of credit.

It is owing to such base representations as these, particularly in the pamphlets of Major Scott Waring, that even the friends of Christianity, and of the Missionaries, have thought themselves obliged in justice to concede that the latter may have been guilty of *indiscretions*. It is scarcely possible, while slander is fly ing about, as in a shower of poisoned arrows, and before they have been repelled, not to have our confidence in some degree wounded. But, while I freely acknowledge that there *may have been* instances of indiscretion, (for the Missionaries are men,) I must insist that neither Mr. Twining, nor Major Scott Waring, nor the Bengal Officer, have substantiated a single charge of the kind.

The substance of the *Bengal Officer's* remarks may be considered under three heads ; namely, the morality of the Hindoo system ; the moral character of the Hindoos ; and the conduct of the Missionaries, and of the native Christians.

Of the Morality of the Hindoo System.

"The religious creed of the Gentoos," says Professor White, in his Bampton Lectures, "is a system of the most barbarous idolatry. They acknowledge indeed one supreme God : yet innumerable are the subordinate deities whom they worship, and innumerable also are the vices and follies which they ascribe to them. With a blindness which has ever been found inseparable from polytheism, they adore, as the attributes of their gods, the wickedness and passions which deform and disgrace human nature; and their worship is, in many respects, not unworthy of the deities who are the objects of it. The favour of beings which have no existence but in the imagination of the superstitious enthusiast, is conciliated by senseless ceremonies and unreasonable mortifications ; by ceremonies which consume the time which should be dedicated to the active and social duties, and by mortifications

which strike at the root of every lawful and innocent enjoyment. What indeed shall we think of a religion which supposes the expiation of sins to consist in penances, than which fancy cannot suggest any thing more rigorous and absurd; in sitting or standing whole years in one unvaried posture; in carrying the heaviest loads, or dragging the most weighty chains; in exposing the naked body to the scorching sun; and in hanging with the head downward before the fiercest and most intolerable fire."*

But our author tells a very different tale. He "reposes the Hindoo system on the broad basis of *its own merits*, convinced that on the enlarged principles of moral reasoning it little needs the meliorating hand of Christian dispensations to render its votaries a sufficiently correct and moral people, for all the useful purposes of civilized society." (p. 9.) Could this be proved, it were no solid objection to Christian missions. To argue merely from what is useful to civilized society, is to argue as an Atheist. Civilized society is not the chief end of man. If there be an eternal hereafter, it must be of infinitely greater moment, both to governors and governed, than all the affairs of the greatest empire upon earth. This writer, when pleading the cause of "beggars by profession," (as Major Scott Waring calls the Hindoo byraggees when they have left that profession and become Christians,) can allege, that religion ought not to be subservient to mere worldly interest; (p. 76.) but when his cause requires it, he can turn about and contend that that which is sufficient for the purposes of civil society is all that is necessary. The cause of God and truth requires that such an atheistical principle should be repelled, otherwise I should have no objection to meet him even upon this ground, persuaded as I am, that whatever is right for another life is wise for this.

But let us attend to "the excellence of the religious and moral doctrines of the Hindoos," as taught in *The Institutes of* Menu, and in other books. From these, especially the former, we are furnished with numerous quotations, occasionally interspersed with

* Sermon X. p. 12.

triumphant questions; such as "Are these tales for children?" "Are these the discourses of barbarians?"

On the Institutes of Menu, I would offer a few remarks—

First: *Let them possess what excellency they may, they are unknown to the people.* The millions of Hindostan have no access to them. Sir William Jones did indeed persuade the brahmans to communicate them to him; and by his translation, and the aid of the press, the European world are now acquainted with them, as well as with other productions to which our author refers us: but to the Hindoo population they are as though they existed not. The lower classes are by their law subjected to penalty for hearing any part of the Vedas read. The young are not taught principles from this work; and it never furnishes a text for discoursing to the adult. There is, indeed, no such thing as moral education, or moral preaching, among the great body of the people. They know far less of the doctrines of Menu, than the vulgar Pagans of ancient Greece knew of the writings of Plato. It is, therefore, utterly fallacious and disingenuous to quote this work as a standard of opinion or practice among the Hindoo people, seeing it is little more known to the bulk of them than if it had no existence.

Secondly: *Though there are some good sentiments in these Institutes, yet they contain a large portion not only of puerility, but of immorality, which this writer has carefully passed over.* Sir William Jones says of the work, that "with many beauties, which need not be pointed out, it contains many blemishes which cannot be justified, or palliated. It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support, though with mutual checks. It is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy, with idle superstitions, and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative, and consequently liable to dangerous misconceptions. It abounds with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies generally absurd, and often ridiculous; the punishments are partial and fanciful; for some crimes dreadfully cruel, for others reprehensibly slight; and the very morals, though rigid enough on the whole, are in one or two instances (as in the case of light oaths, and pious perjury,) unaccountably relaxed——"

The following specimen may serve as a proof of the justness of Sir William's remark, of its being a system of "priestcraft."

Ver. 313. "Let not a king, though in the greatest distress for money, provoke *brahmans* to anger, by taking *their property:* for they, once enraged, could immediately, by sacrifices and imprecations, destroy him, with his troops, elephants, horses, and cars."

V. 315. "What prince could gain wealth by oppressing those who, if angry, could frame *other worlds*, and regents of worlds; could GIVE BEING TO NEW GODS, *and mortals?*"

V. 316. "What man desirous of life would injure those by the aid of whom, that is, *by whose oblations*, WORLDS AND GODS PERPETUALLY SUBSIST; those who are rich in the learning of the Vedas?"

V. 317. "A brahman, whether learned or ignorant, is a POWERFUL DIVINITY; even as fire is a powerful divinity, whether consecrated, or popular."

V. 318. "Even in places for burning the dead, the bright fire is undefiled; and when presented with clarified butter, or subsequent sacrifices, blazes again with extreme splendor."

V. 319. "Thus, although brahmans employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupation, they must invariably be honoured; for they are something TRANSCENDANTLY DIVINE."*

Our author would persuade us that the "Divine Spirit" is the grand object of Hindoo adoration: but he omitted to tell us that the brahmans are above Him, for that WORLDS AND GODS SUBSIST BY THEIR OBLATIONS, and they can GIVE BEING TO NEW GODS. Any person of common discernment may perceive, by this specimen, that let these Institutes be of what antiquity they may, they are of *brahminical origin;* and that, in order to raise this class of men above the control of the civil powers, they not only give them "divinity," but elevate them *above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.*

Thirdly: *Even those parts which our author has selected and quoted, are very far from being unexceptionable.* On the two great subjects of the Unity of God, and the Expiation of Sin, what do the Vedas teach? What ideas are we to attach to the following lan-

* Sir William Jones' Works, Vol. III. pp. 378, 379.

guage?—"Equally perceiving the Supreme Soul in all beings, and all beings in the Supreme Soul, he sacrifices his own spirit by fixing it on the spirit of Gŏd; and approaches the nature of that sole Divinity, who shines by his own effulgence."—If there be any meaning in this rhapsody, it corresponds with the atheistical jargon of Spinoza, confounding the Creator with the work of his hands.

That which follows is worse.—"The Divine Spirit alone is the whole assemblage of gods; all worlds are seated in the Divine Spirit, and the Divine Spirit no doubt produces, by a chain of causes and effects, consistent with free will, the connected series of acts performed by embodied souls." (p. 26.)

Such is their doctrine of "One Supreme Being!" Is then the infinitely glorious God to be not only associated but identified with the rabble of heathen deities, all which *subsist* in the oblations of the brahmans? Is his blessed Name to be annihilated and lost in theirs? Better a thousand times were it to make no mention of Him than to introduce him in such company. The last sentence, though it cautiously guards the idea of human agency, so much, indeed, as to possess the air of modern composition; yet it is certain, that the brahmans, on this principle, constantly excuse themselves from blame in all their deeds, as they have frequently alleged to the Missionaries, that *it is not they, but God in them, that performs the evil.*

What follows is still worse.—"We may contemplate the subtile æther in the cavities of his [that is God's] body; the air, in his muscular motion and sensitive nerves; the supreme solar and igneous light, in his digestive heat and visual organs; in his corporeal fluid, water; in the terrene parts of his fabric, earth. In his heart, the moon; in his auditory nerves, the guardians of eight regions;* in his progressive motion, Vishnu;† in muscular force, Hara;‡ in his organs of speech, Agni;§ in excretion, Mitra;‖ in procreation, Brahma.¶"

I presume the reader has had enough, and needs no reflections of mine. Let us hear the Vindicator of *image worship*. "It is true

* "Eight points of the compass. † The preserver. ‡ The destroyer. § God of fire. ‖ The Sun. ¶ The Creator." (p. 27.)

that in general they worship the Deity through the medium of images; and we satisfactorily learn from the Geeta, that it is not the mere image, but the invisible Spirit that they thus worship." (p. 14.) And thus from Abulfazel:* "They one and all believe in the unity of the Godhead; and although they hold images in high veneration, yet they are by no means idolators, as the ignorant suppose. I have myself frequently discoursed upon the subject with many learned and upright men of this religion, and comprehend their doctrine; which is, that the images are only representations of celestial beings, to whom they turn themselves while at prayer to prevent their thoughts from wandering: and they think it an indispensable duty to address the Deity after that manner." (p. 47.)

If this reasoning be just, there never were any idolators upon earth; for what is said of the Hindoos applies to the worshippers of Baal, and of all other heathen deities. But to call this *worshipping the Deity through the medium of images*, is representing them as connected with Him, when, in fact, they are rivals of him in the hearts of his creatures. The invisible Spirit to which their devotions are directed, according to this writer's own account, is CRISHNA; (p. 45.) who is not God, but a deified creature that takes place of God; a dæmon, whose character, as drawn even in their own shasters, is lewd and treacherous. We might know from these their records, even though an apostle had not told us, that *the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice* TO DEMONS AND NOT TO GOD.

It has been common to speak of the Hindoos as acknowledging one Supreme Being, but as worshipping a number of subordinate deities; and I may have used this language as well as others. The terms supreme and subordinate, however, do not appear to be happily chosen. They might as well be applied to a lawful sovereign and a number of usurpers who had set up the standard of rebellion against him. Whatever subordination there may be

*Abulfazel was the prime minister of Aekbar, one of the Mogul emperors in the sixteenth century, who, perceiving the ill effects of Mahomedan persecution, endeavoured to reconcile the different religious parties in the empire, and to persuade that of the court to think favorably of that of the country.

among these deities with respect to each other, they are all opposed to the true God. What claims can He have, after those of *Creeshna* are satisfied, who calls *his* "THE SUPREME NATURE, *which is superior to all things?*" (p. 45,) Our author would wish him, no doubt, to be thought an attribute of the true God, or, as he calls him, "the preserving power of the Divinity;" but this he cannot be, for his character is immoral. He must, therefore, be a rival, taking place of the Divinity. If it be alleged, that he is merely an imaginary being, and therefore neither the one nor the other; I answer, while he claims "a supreme nature," and is worshipped as possessing it, though he be nothing in himself, yet he is something to the worshippers, and answers all the ends of a conscious and active usurper of the throne of God.

After this, the reader will not be surprised to hear of "repentance, devotion, and pious austerities," as the means of expiating sin. (pp. 29. 36.) We cannot wonder at such notions in benighted Pagans; but that a writer, who has read the New Testament, should think of alleging them as recommendation of the system to the favourable regard of Christians, is a proof of his having either never understood what Christianity is, or forgotten it amidst the charms of idolatry. As to what these "devotions and austerities" are, be they what they may, when considered as *an expiation of sin*, they are worse than nothing. But the truth is, they are neither aimed to propitiate the true God, nor do they consist of any thing which he requires at their hands.

Such are the excellencies of the Hindoo system; such the arguments which the Missionaries are challenged to answer; and such the faith which would be thought to erect her standard by the side of reason! Our author, after enumerating these and other glorious principles, asks, with an air of triumph, "What is it that the Missionaries propose teaching to the Hindoos?" What is it, in religious concerns, which they do not require to be taught.

He allows there are "many reprehensible customs among the Hindoos, the mere offspring of superstition;" but he contends that "they are not enjoined by the Vedas, and are chiefly confined to certain classes." (p. 69.) "I have no hesitation," he

says, "in declaring, that *no branch whatever of their mythology, so far as I understand it, appears, to merit, in the smallest degree, the harsh charges of vice and falsehood.*" (p. 97.) Yet, to say nothing of things which it would be indecent to mention, Dr. Buchanan has quoted a number of authorities from their sacred books in favour of the burning of women, and in which such voluntary sacrifices age declared not to be suicide, but, on the contrary, highly meritorious.* And *the Institutes of Menu* as Sir William Jones observes, are unaccountably relaxed in regard of light oaths, and pious perjury. But these things, and a hundred more, stand for nothing with our author, whose admiration of the general system leads him to forget, as trifling, all such imperfections. "Wherever I look around me," he says, "in the vast region of Hindoo mythology, I discover piety in the garb of allegory: and I see morality at every turn, blended with every tale: and as far as I can rely on my own judgment, it appears the most complete and ample system of moral allegory that the world has ever produced!" (p. 97.)

How shall we stand against this tide of eloquence? I will transcribe a passage from Dr. Tennant. "It is curious," says he, "to observe how the indifference, or rather the dislike, of some old settlers in India, is expressed against the system of their forefathers. It is compared with the Hindoo Institutions with an affectation of impartiality, while, in the mean time, the latter system is extolled in its greatest puerilities and follies: its grossest fables are always asserted to convey some hidden but sound lessons of wisdom. They inveigh against the schisms, disputes, and differences of the western world, ascribing them solely to their religious dogmata. They palliate the most fanatical and most painful of the Hindoo rites, and never fail in discovering some salutary influence which they shed upon society. Wrapt up in devout admiration of the beauty and sublimity of the Vedas, they affect to triumph in their supposed superiority over the simplicity of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. This affectation is the more ridiculous, because it is

* Memoir, p. 96.

indulged by those who pretend to great taste, and profound knowledge of Sanscrit learning."*

If the Doctor's performance had not been written before that of the Bengal Officer, we should almost have supposed he meant to draw his picture.

This author may suppose that a system so good-natured as to concede the divinity of Christ, (p. 50.) might be expected to receive some concessions in return: but he had better not attempt a compromise, for the systems cannot agree. If he be a heathen, let him cast in his lot with heathens. Let him, if he should get intoxicated, attend to the recipe of his "divine Menu;" let him in order "to atone for his offence, drink more spirit in flame till he severely burn his body; or let him drink, boiling hot, until he die, the urine of a cow, or pure water, or milk, or clarified butter, or juice expressed from cow-dung." (p. 41.) Let him, if he should be vicious, expect to become a dog, or a cat, or some more despicable creature; or, if he be virtuous, let him hope for his reward in the favour of Crishna. (p. 46.) But we are Christians, and have learned another lesson. We have been taught to revere the authority of Him who hath said, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.*

Of the Moral Character of the Hindoos.

This is a subject of great importance in the present controversy; for if Hindooism produce as good fruits as Christianity, the necessity of attempting the conversion of its votaries, must, in a great degree, if not entirely, be set aside. It is a subject too in which our author has the advantage of us, as it must be more agreeable to the public mind to think favourably than unfavourably of a great people who form now a component part of the empire. Nothing but truth, and a desire to do them good, can justify us in disputing these favourable accounts.

* Thoughts on the British Government in India, p. 141. Note.

Considering the importance of the subject, and the weight of testimony which our author must be aware he had to encounter, we may suppose he has brought forward all the proof of which he is capable. That the reader may be able to judge on the subject, I will first state the substance of the evidence on the other side, and then inquire what this writer has done towards overturning it.

I have already mentioned three or four testimonies, in my Letter to the chairman of the East India Company.* These I shall not repeat.

Tamerlane the Great, when about to die, thus addressed his sons and statesmen: "Know, my dear children, and elevated statesmen, that the inhabitants of Hindostan cultivates imposture, fraud, and deception, and considers them to be meritorious accomplishments. Should any person entrust to them the care of his property, that person will soon become only the nominal possesser of it."

"The tendency of this my mandate to you, statesmen, is to preclude a confidence in their actions, or an adoption of their advice."†

"At Benares," adds Dr. Buchanan, "the fountain of Hindoo learning and religion, where Captain Wilford, author of the essays on the Indian and Egyptian mythology, has long resided in the society of the brahmans, a scene has been lately exhibited which certainly has never had a parallel in any other *learned* society in the world.

"The pundit of Captain Wilford having for a considerable time been guilty of interpolating his books, and of fabricating new sentences in old works, to answer a particular purpose, was at length detected and publicly disgraced. As a last effort to save his character, 'he brought ten brahmans, not only as his compurgators, but to swear, by what is most sacred in their religion, to the *gen-*

* See *Part* I. pp. 209, 210 of this volume.

† Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, pp. 113, 114. "Marquis Cornwallis was never known, during his administration in India, to admit a native to his confidence. Under the administration of Marquis Wellesley there is a total exclusion of native counsel."

vineness of the extracts.'* Captain Wilford would not permit the ceremonial of perjury to take place, but dismissed them from his presence with indignation."

Dr. Tennant, *late chaplain to his Majesty's troops in Bengal*, has written very explicitly on the subject, not only stating facts, but pointing out their connexion with the system. As his testimony includes the opinions of Sir James M'Intosh, Sir William Jones and some other very respectable authorities, and as he himself cannot be accused of any strong predilection for missions, I shall transcribe a few pages from his account.

"The native character," he says, "however amiable in some respects it may appear, is frequently stained with vices directly hostile to society. The crime of PERJURY, *from the great defects of their religious system*, is remarkably prevalent, and in many instances renders the execution of justice difficult and impossible.

"The prevalence of this vice," says Sir James M'Intosh, "which I have myself observed, is, perhaps, a more certain criterion of a general dissolution of moral principle, than other more daring and ferocious crimes, much more terrible to the imagination, and of which the immediate consequences are more destructive to society." "Perjury," adds Dr. Tennant, "indicates the absence of all the common restraints by which men are withheld from the commission of crimes. It is an attack upon religion and law in the very point of their union for the protection of human society. It weakens the foundation of every right by rendering the execution of justice unattainable.

"Sir William Jones," continues he, "after long judicial experience, was obliged, reluctantly, to acknowledge this moral depravity of the natives of India. He had carried out with him to that country a strong prejudice in their favour, which he had imbibed in the course of his studies; and which in him was perhaps neither unamiable, nor ungrateful. This prejudice he could not longer retain against the *universal testimony of Europeans.* and the enormous examples of depravity among the natives, which he often witnessed in his judicial capacity."†

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. VIII. p. 23.

† Thoughts on the British Government in India, pp. 54. 77.

Again: Having described the state of the country previously to its falling into hands of the British, Dr. Tennant says, "thus within the short space of a man's life, and almost in our own remembrance, the empire of India fell into anarchy and ruin; not from the external violence of foreign enemies, but from *the inveteracy and extent of corruption which pervaded the whole of its members.*"*

Again: "The boasted humanity of the Hindoo system, to all sentient being, is but ill supported, when we come to a close examination of the customs which it tolerates, the precepts which it enjoins, or the actual conduct of its votaries. Though it be admitted that some of the above horrid customs are a violation of their written code, yet there are other practices equally shocking, to which it affords its immediate sanction. The public encouragement held out to aged pilgrims who drown themselves in the Ganges, under the notion of acquiring religious merit, is equally repugnant with the practice already noticed, to reason and humanity. No less than four or five persons have been seen drowning themselves at one time, with the view of performing a religious sacrifice, of high value in their own estimation, and that of many thousands who attend this frightful solemnity. The recommendation given to a favourite wife to burn herself on the same funeral pile with the dead body of her husband, affords not an unfrequented spectacle of deliberate cruelty, which cannot, perhaps be equalled in the whole annals of superstition.

"The cruel treatment of the sick, the aged, and the dying, if not a precept, is a practical result of this degrading system, far more universal than any of those already mentioned: it is of a nature which the most moderate share of humanity would prompt any person to use very zealous efforts to remedy. As soon as any mortal symptoms are discovered in the state of a patient by his physician, or by his relations, he is, if in Bengal, removed from his bed, and carried to the brink of the Ganges, where he is laid down with his feet and legs immersed in the river: there, instead of receiving from his friends any of the tender consolations of sym-

* Thoughts on the British Government in India, pp. 54, 57.

pathy, to alleviate the pain of his departing moments, his mouth, nose, and ears, are stuffed with clay, or wet sand, while the bystanders crowd close around him, and incessantly pour torrents of water upon his head and body. It is thus, amidst the convulsive struggles of suffocation, added to the agony of disease, that the wretched Hindoo bids farewel to his present existence, and finally closes his eyes upon the sufferings of life.

"But waving these particular usages, some of which are, perhaps, abuses which have sprung out of their primitive institutions, it may be contended, on good grounds, that the general spirit of the system has itself a tendency, in many instances, to promote ignorance and encourage vice.

"In the Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire, Mr. Orme has presented the public with a laborious and detailed exposition of all those defects of the Hindoo system. The author in this work, conveys no very favourable impression of the Indian character; but his ideas are the result of personal observation: they are clear, forcible, and correct. Towards the close of this interesting disquisition, he thus sums up the general impression which the subject left upon his mind. 'Having brought to a conclusion this Essay on the Government and People of Hindostan, I cannot refrain from making the reflections which so obviously arise from the subject. Christianity vindicates all its glories, all its honours, and all its reverence, when we behold the most horrid impieties avowed amongst the nations on whom its influence does not shine, as actions necessary in the common conduct of life: I mean poisonings, treachery, and assassination, among the sons of ambition; rapine, cruelty, and extortion in the ministers of justice.—I leave Divines to vindicate, by more sanctified reflections, the cause of their religion and of their God.'—

"The Hindoo system makes little or no provision for the instruction of the great body of the people: a defect the more remarkable, when we advert to the number and authority of his priesthood, and the great multiplicity and size of its sacred volumes. Their Vedas, Poorans, and other books held sacred, contain, it is said, a copious system of sound morality; and from the specimens already translated, this must be partly admitted; but

the truths contained in these writings are almost totally obscured and rendered useless by a vast mixture of *puerile fictions and frivolous regulations*. And besides, the canonical books of the Hindoos have always been regarded as a bequest too sacred to be committed to vulgar hands: to the far greater part of the community, their perusal is strictly forbidden: closely guarded in the archives of the learned, to the the great body of the people they remain, in the most emphatic sense, 'a dead letter.'

"Of the ceremonies of brahmanism, some are shewy, many are absurd, and not a few *both indecent and immoral*. Its temples were formerly in some districts richly endowed; they are represented by all travellers as maintaining a number of priests, and what seems peculiar, a number of women consecrated to this service, who are taught to sing and dance at public festivals in honour of the gods. The voluptuous indolence in which they are destined to spend their lives, renders them totally useless to society; while the indecency of their manners gives room to suspect that they may injure it by their example.

"The temples themselves, which in other countries excite sentiments of reverence and devotion, are in India plenished with images of fecundity, and of creative power, TOO GROSS FOR DESCRIPTION. Similar representations are also displayed by those images which, at certain times, are drawn through the streets amidst the dancing, noise, and acclamations of the multitude. The Ruth Jatra, or riding of the gods, is a ceremony at once cruel and indecent. The carriages on which their deities are then placed, are of immense height, and supported on sixteen wheels; the whole drawn along by thousands of fanatics some of whom fall down before these wheels, and being instantly crushed, are, as they believe, put in possessions of immortal bliss.

"It would be, perhaps, rash, after all, to affirm that the Hindoos are immoral and depraved in a degree *proportioned to the melancholy extent of their superstitious system*, though their minds are strongly withdrawn by it from feeling the due weight of moral obligations. Those [however] who are concerned in the police, know well the frequency of fraud, robbery, and murder, as well as the great number of delinquents which have always rendered the

prisons more crowded than any other habitations in India. It has not been from them, nor indeed from any class of men intimately acquainted with their manners, that the Hindoo character has received so many encomiums for its innocence and simplicity."

Speaking of their wandering religious devotees, he says, "Mr. Richardson, author of the Persian and Arabic Dictionary, has characterized these vagrants, under the article *Fakeer*, in the following manner:—"In this singular class of men, who in Hindostan despise every sort of clothing, there are a number of enthusiasts, but a far greater proportion of knaves; every vagabond, who has an aversion to labour, being received into a fraternity which is regulated by laws of a secret and uncommon nature. The Hindoos view them with a wonderful respect, not only on account of their sanctified reputation, but from a substantial dread of their power. The Fakeer pilgrimages often consist of many thousands of naked saints, who exact, wherever they pass, a general tribute; while their character is too sacred for the civil power to take cognizance of their conduct."*

Many other testimonies might be produced. If the reader wishes to see them systematically stated, he may find much to his purpose in *Cunninghame's Christianity in India.* Chap. II.

We have now to examine what our author has advanced on the other side. Has he attempted to weaken this body of evidence, or to overcome it by testimonies more numerous or more credible? Neither the one nor the other. He takes no notice of any thing that has been said by others; not even by Dr. Buchanan, though he was professedly answering his *Memoir.* And as to the testimonies which he produces, lo, they are TWO . . . . . viz. HIMSELF and ABULFAZEL!

From *his own* knowledge he writes many things. He resided in India many years; has been much acquainted with the people; has gone into their temples, and never saw any thing indecent in them; has entrusted money and liquors to a great amount in the hands of Hindoo servants, and never found them unfaithful—— but stop: we know not who this witness is: we cannot admit of

* Thoughts on the British Government in India, § IX. X.

anonymous testimony. No man, while he withholds his name from the public, has a right to expect credit, any further than what he advances may recommend itself. I must take leave, therefore, to set down all that he has related from his own knowledge as nugatory.

Let us examine the next witness. Abulfazel might be a great and enlightened statesmen, and might be aware that the persecutions carried on against the Hindoos in the preceding reigns, were impolitic as well as cruel. He might wish to praise them into attachment, and to soften the antipathies of the Mahometans against them. Hence he might endeavor to persuade the latter that the former were "not idolators," but, like themselves, "believers in one God, and withal a very amiable and good sort of people. But whatever proof this may afford of Abulfazel's talents for governing, the truth of his statements requires to be confirmed by more disinterested testimony; and where the whole current of European experience is against it, it can be of no account.

The reader will draw the inference, that the evidence of Hindoo depravity is not weakened, in the least degree, by any thing this writer has advanced.

Of the Conduct of the Missionaries, and the Native Christians.

On this part of the subject our author is less profuse than his predecessor. There are a few passages in his performance, however, which require notice. He says, "If the conduct of the Missionaries has here so unwisely forced itself on the attention of the public; and thus rendered them obnoxious to the displeasure of our Government in the East; in having, unsanctioned by its authority, assumed the dangerous province of attempting to regulate the consciences of its native subjects; to the manifest tendency of disturbing that repose and public confidence that forms at this moment the chief security of our precarious tenure in Hindostan: if men, thus labouring for subsistence in their vocation, and under the necessity of making converts, at any rate, in order to ensure the continuance of their allowances; and the permanency of their Mission, rashly venture to hurl the bigot anathema of intolerance at

the head of the 'barbarian Hindoos,' and unadvisedly to vilify the revered repositories of their faith, we may find some colour of excuse in the seeming necessity under which they act; but that a member of the English Church," &c. (pp. 3, 4.)

On this tedious sentence, or rather, part of a sentence, I would offer a few remarks. 1. If the conduct of the Missionaries has been forced on the attention of the public, it is their adversaries that have forced it. Nothing has been done, by them, or their friends, but in self-defence. 2. I do not understand how the *private request* of the Governor-General for Mr. Carey and his colleagues, at a certain critical period, to desist from preaching to the natives, can be attributed to *displeasure*, when the acting magistrates who delivered the message acknowledged that "they were well satisfied with the character and deportment of the Missionaries, and that no complaints had ever been lodged against them." 3. If, at the first outset, their undertaking was not sanctioned by authority, and if on that account they settled in the Danish territory; yet Government, having known them, and being satisfied that they acted not from contumacy, but from the most pure, upright, and peaceable principles, has always been friendly to them. Under the administration of Marquis Wellesley, they lived secure. 4. There never was an idea of their labours disturbing the confidence which the natives place in the British Government, till European adversaries suggested it. 5. The Missionary labour of the men referred to, is not for their own subsistence; nor do they subsist by "allowances" from England. At all times this has not been the case; but, at present, the remittances sent from this country are for another use. It is by their own literary labours that they subsist, which not only supply their wants, but enable them to devote a surplus for the propagation of the gospel. Did they act from mercenary motives, they might lay by their thousands, and return, as well as their accusers, in affluence to their native country. 6. If "the bigot anathema of intolerance," which this writer endeavours to hurl at the Missionaries, hurt them no more than theirs does the Hindoos, there is no cause for alarm. But who could have imagined that an address to the conscience could have been represented as "assuming to regulate it;" and that a

writer with the cant of toleration in his mouth, could advocate the cause of intolerance!

This author tells us of "a circumstance having recently come to his knowledge, that exhibits proof superior to a hundred arguments, of the impropriety and dangerous consequences of injudicious interference with the Hindoos, on the score of their religion." (p. 54.) This "circumstance" must surely, then, be of importance, especially at a time when arguments are so scarce. And what is it? A native of Calcutta had lost cast; he went to one of the Missionaries, and was immediately baptized; soon after this, he became a preacher; in addressing his countrymen, he provoked their resentment; and, after being assaulted with clods and brick-bats, narrowly escaped with his life. But here I must again take the liberty of reminding the gentleman, that he is out of his province. An *anonymous* writer has no business to obtrude himself as a *witness*, but merely as a reasoner.

I know the first part of this story to be a fabrication, and I suspect the whole to be one: but whether any part of it be true or not, it makes nothing for his argument. He might with equal justice accuse the Missionaries of having been assaulted by him, and his friend the Major, with a volley of foul abuse.

All our opponents declaim on the danger of tolerating Missionaries, and urge the necessity of an immediate suppression of their labours. Yet I cannot learn that the Hindoos, as a body, are an intolerant people. There may be, and doubtless are, exceptions; but in general, I have always understood, that in this respect they differ widely from the Mahometans. And if this be true, how can they be offended with Government for being of the same mind? Were they themselves an intolerant people, it might be expected that a government, to be acceptable to them, must not only protect them in the exercise of their own religion, but persecute all who might endeavour to convince or persuade them to relinquish it. Such is exactly the line of conduct which our opponents mark out for the British Government in India: but the Hindoos appear to desire no such thing; and if they did, who does not perceive that it would be mean and degrading for any government in this manner to render itself the instrument of their intolerance? Whether,

therefore, these men, in urging such advice on the different departments of the British Government, consult their honour, or their own inclination, let those high authorities decide.

Such is the modesty of this writer, that he allows, "It would not *perhaps* become him to assume the province of dictating the means of suppressing these Missionaries;" but he makes no scruple of asserting that "the Government in India stands pledged to the Honourable Company, and to the empire at large, by every sense of imperious duty, and by every consideration of safety to our countrymen abroad, by the most prompt and decisive interposition of their authority" to suppress them. He is also so good as to inform the government with what facility it may be effected, inasmuch as the Danish settlement of Serampore is now [probably] under our immediate control. (p. 170.)

If Government, whether in England or in India, be of opinion that the accusers of these Missionaries have substantiated their charges against them, they can be at no loss for the means of suppressing them: but if they should think it right to wait for better evidence than has yet appeared, I hope they may stand acquitted of violating their pledge either to the Honourable Company, or to the empire at large.

AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE LATE

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TO INDIA;

PART THE THIRD.

CONTAINING

STRICTURES ON MAJOR SCOTT WARING'S THIRD PAMPHLET:

ON A

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL:

AND ON THE

PROPRIETY OF CONFINING MISSIONARY UNDERTAKINGS TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH IN ANSWER TO DR. BARROW:

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

ATTESTING THE VERACITY OF THE MISSIONARIES.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commmanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, unto the end of the world. Amen.

JESUS CHRIST.

PREFACE.

IT appears to be the design of Providence, by a succession of events, to effect a more marked distinction between the friends and enemies of religion than has, of late years, subsisted. Through a variety of causes they have long been confounded. As though there were no standard for either side to repair to, they have each mingled with the other in a sort of promiscuous mass.

The effect of this junction has been more unfavourable to the cause of Christ, than to that of his adversaries: for as holy things would not communicate holiness, but unclean things would communicate uncleanliness ;* so it has been in respect to these commixtures. Ungodly men who have had to do with holy things, have not thereby become holy ; but godly men, who have had to do with unclean things, have thereby become unclean. Hence it appears to be the will of God, by his inscrutable providence, to effect a closer union among Christians, and a more marked separation between them and their adversaries. As though some decisive conflict were about to take place, the hosts on each side of them seem to be mustering for the battle.

The French Revolution (that mighty shaking of the church and of the world) has been productive of this among other effects. Great numbers, who had before passed as Christians, perceiving Infidelity to be coming into fashion, avowed their unbelief.†

* Haggai ii. 12, 13.

† Many of these, however, when the rage of French principles began to abate, perceiving that they had mistaken the road to preferment, turned about, and assumed to be the patrons of rational and orthodox Christianity.

Christians, on the other hand, of different denominations, felt a new motive to unite in defence of the common faith in which they were agreed.

The same effect has been produced by the sending out of missions to the heathen. The effort itself excited a correspondence of feeling, a communication of sentiment, and a unity of action, and that to a great extent: and now that success has, in some measure, attended it, it has drawn against it a host of adversaries. As the assembling of Israel before the Lord in Mizeph,* though they had neither sword nor spear among them, excited the jealousy of the Philistines, and drew forth their armies in the hope of crushing them at the outset, so it is at this day. It is remarkable what a tendency the genuine exercises of true religion have to manifest the principles of men, and to draw them into a union, either on the side of Christ, or on that of his adversaries. You may now perceive Deists, Socinians, and others who retain the form of Christianity but deny the power, naturally falling into their ranks on one side, and serious Christians, almost forgetting their former differences, as naturally uniting on the other. I question whether there ever was a controversy, since the days of the apostles, in which religion and irreligion were more clearly marked, and their respective adherents more distinctly organized.

But is it *Christianity* that they attack? O no! It is *Methodism, Calvinism, fanaticism, or sectarianism*, &c. And is it a new thing for the adversaries of religion to attack it under other names? Was it ever known that they did otherwise? The apostle Paul was not accused as a zealous promoter of the true religion, but as a *pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a ringleader of an obnoxious sect.* Unless we wish to be imposed upon by names instead of things, we can be at no loss to perceive that the prime object of their attack is, THE RELIGION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Among those who contribute their aid in this important struggle, we shall find the *Edinburgh Reviewers* just now coming forward. It is one of the professed objects of these Editors to "use their

* 1 Sam. vii.

feeble endeavours in assisting the public judgment on those topics to which its attention was actually directed." The attack on missions is preceded by one on *methodism;** for it would have been imprudent to have fallen abruptly upon the subject. Under this general term, the Reviewer professes to include, in one undistinguished mass, "the sentiments of the Arminian and Calvinistic Methodists, and of the *evangelical* Clergymen of the Church of England!" These he describes as three classes of fanatics, very good *subjects* indeed, but "engaged in one general conspiracy against common sense and rational *orthodox Christianity!*"

These fanatics are denounced as maintaining "the absurd notions of a universal providence, extending not only to the rise and fall of nations, but to the concerns of individuals; the insufficiency of baptism, and of a participation in the customary worship of the country, without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, to denominate men Christians;" and what is worse, it seems, as "making a marked and dangerous division of mankind into the *godly* and the *ungodly!*"

The party seems to be extending too; and where it will end the Reviewer cannot tell, nor whether the evil admits of any cure. "All mines and subterraneous places belong to them; they creep into hospitals, and small schools, and so work their way upwards. They beg all the little livings, particularly in the north of England, from the ministers for the time being; and from these fixed points they make incursions upon the happiness and common sense of the vicinage." The Reviewer "most *sincerely* deprecates such an event; but it will excite in him no manner of surprise, if a period arrives when the churches of the *sober* and *orthodox* part of the English Clergy are completely deserted by the middling and lower classes of the community." They have not only made "an alarming inroad into the church," but are "attacking the army and the navy. The Principality of Wales, and the East India Company, they have already acquired." And what is more still, they have made their way into "the LEGISLATURE; and by the talents of some of them, and the unimpeached excellence of their

* No XXII. p. 341

characters, render it probable that fanaticism will increase rather than diminish!"

What is to be done with these fanatics? Truly, the Reviewer does not know. "He cannot see what is likely to impede the progress" of their opinions. He is not wanting in good will: but what can he do? He "believes them to be *very good subjects;* and has no doubt but that any farther attempt upon their religious liberties, without reconciling them to the Church, would have a direct tendency to render them disaffected to the state." He thinks "something may perhaps be done in the way of ridicule;" but ridicule in some men's hands becomes itself ridiculous.

Ah, well may these Reviewers talk of their "*feeble* endeavours in assisting the public judgment!" They have gleaned from the Methodist and Evangelical Magazines a portion of real weakness and absurdity, though several of their extracts are such only in their opinion; and with this, by their comments, they have mixed a larger portion of misrepresentation. The best use that the editors of those publications can make of the critique will be to be more cautious than they have been in some instances; but while they pluck up the weeds there is no need to plant the deadly night-shade in their place. The Reviewer proposes, in a subsequent number to write an article on *Missions.* By the foregoing specimen we can be at no loss what to expect at his hand.

It has been said of the *Edinburgh Review,* that, "with a greater force of writing than the *Monthly*, it unites at least an equal rancour against genuine Christianity, without that suspicion of Socinian and sectarian bias under which the other labours; while the barbarity, insolence, and pride, which it displays in almost all its criticisms, is sufficient to give it a prominence amongst the works of darkness." An attack on missions, from such a quarter, if not to their honour, cannot be to their dishonour; and if made by the writer of this article especially, will, it is hoped, produce no ill effects.

STRICTURES

ON

MAJOR SCOTT WARING'S

THIRD PAMPHLET.

THE present performance is of a piece with this author's other productions. The quantity of repetition surpasses any thing that I have been used to meet with in writers of the most ordinary talents. The foul spirit which pervades it is much the same, upon the whole, as heretofore. It is true, there is much less acrimony towards many of his opponents; but what is taken from them is laid upon the Missionaries. The title of it might have been, *War with the Missionaries, and Peace with all the world besides.* The remarks on the critique of *The Christian Observer*, are so many advances for *a separate peace.* The same may be said of his compliments to the members of the Church of Scotland, to the Arminian Methodists to the United Brethren, and to all indeed who have *not* sent Missionaries to India. He has found some difficulty, however, in ranking under this head the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, whom he will not allow to have sent out any Missionaries to India, but merely to have given pecuniary assistance; and that only, it seems, in former times. Their own Reports, however, speak a different language: they express their desire of sending Missionaries, provided any could be found to be sent.

The sum is, our author and his party are aware of their having erred in their first attack. By making it on so extended a scale, they shocked the feelings of the Christian world, and drew upon themselves their united and indignant censures. But what is to be done? Having committed an error, they must repair it as well as they are able; and there is no way of doing this but by endeavouring to divide their opponents. With all his antipathy to the Evangelical Clergy, the Major would make peace with them, and grant them almost any terms, so that they would be neutrals in his war of extermination against the Missionaries.

Having requested a friend in town to furnish the Major with the First Part of my *Apology*, he had no sooner dipt into it than he proclaimed, in his preface, that I had "put beyond the possibility of future doubt the correctness of his private information;" that is, by publishing Mr. Carey's letter, in which he speaks of *alarms which had been spread through India*. After this, no person, he presumes, will venture to say that an alarm was not spread through India in 1806 and 1807, relative to Missionaries. (p. vi.) But whoever denied that an alarm was spread *among Europeans*, throughout India? I knew that at each of the three presidencies these alarms had been industriously circulated, and strange reports added to them, as that the Missionaries, or at least Mr. Carey, were imprisoned, &c. &c. It was of these alarms that I understood, and still understand Mr. Carey to have written, and not of any which were entertained by the *native population of India*, which is the point that our author's private information aims to establish. From the date of the Vellore mutiny, there can be no doubt of alarms having existed throughout the country among Europeans; and in Mr. Carey's opinion, so far as they related to the plans of Christian Missionaries, they were fabricated by Deists, who availed themselves of that and other circumstances to answer an end.

He adds, "On the 13th of Feb, 1807, Mr. Carey writes, *A number of persons were preparing to embark for Europe with a view to spread the alarm at home.*" Mr. Carey writes no such thing. Whatever merit or demerit there may be in that paragraph, it belongs to the apologist, and not to Mr. Carey. This, if

our author had been a little less in hurry, he must have perceived. Mr. Carey, instead of having communicated it is supposed *not to be aware of it*. And though it is there intimated that a number of persons were at that time preparing to embark, *with a view* to spread the alarms at home, yet it was never imagined that this was their *sole view*, in returning to Europe.

There is no difficulty in understanding the Major, when he suggests that Mr. Carey must have included the Governor of Ceylon, and the Governor-General and Council of Bengal among the Deists who swarm in India, "because they have very effectually opposed the plans of the Missionaries." (p. viii.) Of the former I have heard nothing, except from our author, and therefore hope it may resemble many other things of his communicating. And as to the latter, if any such effectual opposition has been made, as he appears to hope for, it is unknown to me. But if it have, it is no new thing for Deists so far to conceal their motives as to influence public measures, even those in which men of very different principles preside.

I have no inclination to follow this writer through one tenth of his wranglings and repetitions; nor is there any need of it. It will be sufficient, if, after a few general remarks, I answer his most serious charges against the Missionaries.

The Major intimates, that if his assertion of Mr. Ward's having impiously perverted a passage of the holy gospel could be disproved, that were coming *to an issue*. (p. 22.) If it were in the power of evidence to convince him on this subject, he would be convinced by what is alleged by *the Christian Observer*. But the truth is, as Dr. Johnson is said to have bluntly expressed it, in answering an ignorant opponent, *We may offer evidence but we cannot furnish men with understanding*.

It is still persisted in, that missions, or Bibles, sent into a country where we had engaged to preserve to them *the free exercise of religion*, amount to a violation of the public faith. (p. 8.) The free exercise of one religion then, it seems, is inconsistent with the free offer of another. The next proposal to government may be for the silencing of Protestant Dissenters; for so long as they are allowed to preach in the country, the members of the National

Church, according to his reasoning, have not the free exercise of their religion.

When converts to Christianity are mentioned, the Major calls out, "Where are they? Who are they? I can find no account of them in the *Missionary Reports*." (p. 18.) He speaks, however, in another place, of the "nonsense that we may read in the *Missionary Reports*, relative to the success of the Missionaries, in making numerous converts to Christianity. (p. 33.) If he has read the last four or five Reports of *The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, he must there have met with the largest portion of this kind of nonsense that has appeared of late years, particularly in the communications of Mr. Gericke. And, as he has examined the Baptist Periodical Accounts, he cannot have overlooked the list of the baptised in No. XV. down to Nov. 1804. He must there have seen several brahmans among them, and also several Mahometans, and consequently have known his private accounts to be unfounded. But perhaps he will answer, as in p. 73, "This is an atrocious falsehood." We leave the reader to judge from what has been said, and what may yet be said, to whom the charge of falsehood belongs. Meanwhile, if our author be determined to disbelieve the accounts, let him disbelieve them; but let him not say they are not to be found in the Missionary Reports, and at the same time accuse those Reports of nonsense for relating them!

It is remarkable with what facility the Major picks up the discordant principles of other men, and sews them together in a sort of patch-work. One while the Bishop of St. Asaph seemed to be his oracle: now the Barrister is every thing. Getting hold of him, he can mimic the Socinian, and declaim against John Calvin. The Bishop of St. Asaph would have censured him for traducing Calvin, for whom he professed a high respect. But when a man has no principles of his own, what can he do? He had better not borrow those of others, however, till he knows how to use them.

By the frequent recurrence of such terms as *hot-headed maniacs*, *madmen*, *mad Calvinists*, *mad Baptists*, &c. &c. it would seem as if the gentleman himself was scarcely sober. Had this raving kind of diction been confined to his later publications, we might

have ascribed it to the goadings of the Reviews; but as it has been his strain of writing from the beginning, it must belong to his nature.

We have heard much of a certain *tract*, which calls the natives "barbarians, and their shasters barbarian-shasters," and of some thousands of it being distributed among the native troops, and other inhabitants of Bengal. At length we are told, that the Missionaries, with all their activity, *did not visit one military station;* that their abusive tracts were distributed *once* at Berhampore among the native troops, and that the copy now in England was given by one of our Seapoys to his officer. (p. 129.) We are much obliged to the Major for being so explicit. He may tell us, in his next piece, who translated it; for he seems to be quite in the secret. At present, I can only observe, that, by his account, this obnoxious tract appears to have been scattered among the troops by thousands, if not without hands, yet without a single visit from the Missionaries!

The Major has not yet finished his labours in defaming the memory of Mr. Thomas. "A man," he says, "whom Mr. Thomas puts down as a brahman, a man of title, was, in fact, a servant of Mr. Thomas, an outcast of society. This fellow, Parbotee, as he is called, robbed his master, Mr. Thomas, and ran away, and, as I understand, died mad, at a distant period." (p. 75.) For a writer, on the authority of men whom he will not name, thus to abuse the memory of the dead, is an outrage on decency. Parbotee was and is a brahman, and never was a servant to Mr. Thomas. When will this man desist from retailing falsehood?

Speaking of Missionary Societies, he says, "There is also an Arminian Methodist Society, and a Society of the United Brethren, whose Missionaries are well employed in Pagan countries; *but they have wisely refrained from sending Missionaries to India.*" (p. 85.) Have they? Yet we are told in the preface to the *Observations*, p. xv. that there are "spread over India, Arminian Methodists, and United Brethren Missionaries, &c. &c. And in the letter to Mr. Owen, we are assured that, "on most accurately looking over the preface, he could not discover either a misstatement or a misrepresentation!" (p. 117.) Whether he discovered this, or whether he wrote both without discovering them to be contradictions, it is not for me to determine; but if the latter were

the case I should not be surprised, for it is easy to perceive that, in many instances, he knows not what he writes.

"Mr. Marshman," says he, "was at Saugur, during a great Hindoo festival, where at least 200,000 Hindoos were assembled. He preached to as many as could hear him, and he told the Hindoos that 'he did not come, like other Englishmen, to *take their money*, but to bring the jewel above all price, the grand offer of salvation.' The Hindoos became clamourous on their devotions being thus disturbed, and Mr. Marshman exclaimed, 'Well, since you decline it, remember that as you have received the gospel, you have no longer any excuse for idolatry, but will be *damned everlastingly*.'" (pp. 36. 98.)

It is the practice of this writer to make no references to the page or book from which he takes his extracts. In cases of accusation, this is unpardonable, and is difficult to be accounted for on any principle but that of a desire to escape detection.

The only visits to Saugur of which I have any remembrance, or can find any traces in the Periodical Accounts, are two. One may be found in No. XVI. pp. 225, 226; but in this, there is no address to the Hindoos of any kind; his quotation, therefore, could not be taken from thence. The other is in No. XIV. pp. 513—522. Here there is an address to the Hindoos; and as some of the words which are quoted are to be found in p. 521, I conclude it must be to this address that he refers.

On reading the whole account, and comparing it with Major Scott Waring's, I find in the latter a much larger portion of misrepresentation than of fact. Mr. Marshman was not the Missionary who addressed the Hindoos, but Mr. Chamberlain; and the circumstance of their "becoming clamourous on account of their devotions being disturbed," is not in the account, and must, therefore, either have been taken from some other account, and without regard to truth applied to this, or be absolutely a fabrication. Nor is this all: There were no such words spoken as of his *being come to bring the jewel above all price, the grand offer of salvation:* nor did he exclaim, *Well, since you decline it, remember, that as you have received the gospel, you have no longer any excuse for idolatry, but will be damned everlastingly.* These are Major Scott

Waring's word's, and not those of the Missionary. He may pretend that there were things said which are capable of this construction; but he has no right to quote his own constructions, be they just or not, as the words of another. I hoped before, that the Major, notwithstanding all his misstatements, had not been guilty of *wilful* errors; but really, after this, he hardly leaves one the power of placing any dependence on his veracity.

A great deal is said about the *number* of the Missionaries. It is introduced in this pamphlet in no less than seven places. It is said that "the London Society maintain *thirteen* Missionaries on the Coast, and in Ceylon, and one at Surat; and that *three of the number are women.*" (p. 15.) Are women then to be reckoned as Missionaries? If so, we have considerably more than eleven in Bengal. But why did he not take in their children too? In reckoning the whole number of both the societies, sometimes they are twenty-three, and sometimes twenty-five, yet both are given as the number "now in India." (pp. 25. 81.) To assist the gentleman in his future reckonings, I will put down the names and places of the Missionaries of both societies.

Messrs. Carey, Marshman, Ward, Moore, Rowe, Robinson, and Felix Carey, at *Serampore;* Mr. Chamberlain, at *Cutwa;* and Messrs. Mardon and Chater, at *Rangoon, in Burmah.* Besides them, there *was* Mr. Biss, but he died in 1807. Mr. *William* Carey, though he accompanied Mr. Moore to Dacca, is not at present a Missionary. The number of Missionaries therefore, that we have now in the Company's territories, is only *eight.*

The following extract of a letter from the Secretary of the London Society will show what are *their* numbers and situations. "All the Missionaries we have in India are, Messrs. Cran and Desgranges, at *Vizagapatam;* Mr. Loveless, at the school at *Madras;* Dr. Taylor, at *Bombay;* Mr. Ringletaube, in *Travancore;* and Messrs. Vos, Erhartd, and Palm, in *Ceylon.*—Taylor never got to Surat, nor can he go at present; and he is not at all engaged as a Missionary as yet, and never, I believe preached one sermon to the heathen. None of those now in India have been at Ceylon, but those in Ceylon were first for a few weeks at Tranquebar. Loveless and Desgranges are married, as also the Ceylon Missionaries;

but as their wives do not preach, they ought not to be called Missionaries. We have heard nothing of Messrs. Vos, Erhardt, and Palm being sent from Ceylon, and do not believe it.

Now, lest the Major should again be out in his reckoning, I may inform him that the whole number of Missionaries from this Society in Hindostan is *five;* which, with the three who are or were in Ceylon, make eight; and which, added to the eight in Bengal, make SIXTEEN.

Our author has furnished himself with the *Baptist Statement*, which seems to have afforded him much new light upon the subject. This Statement, the reader should be informed, was drawn up in the spring of 1807, not to be sold, but circulated among the Directors, and the members of Administration. The design of it was to counteract the influence of a number of private letters which had then arrived from India against the mission; and I have no particular reason to doubt of its having answered the end.

Had the Major known the particulars communicated in this Statement sooner, he "should not have written one word about Bengal Missionaries." (p. 60.) We hope then he will learn, in future, to wait till he understands a subject before he writes upon it. It might be full as creditable to himself to do so, and some saving to the public. But we must not count too fast on the Major's approbation. If he had not written, it had been, not from any satisfactory opinion of the Missionaries' conduct, but from their being laid under an interdiction which he hopes may be sufficient to stop them in their career. It is possible, however, he might have written notwithstanding; for since he has seen the Statement, he has written nearly as much as he did before.

Our author, in going over the Statement, finds the Baptist Society submitting to the consideration of Government the following proposition, as the opinion of the Missionaries: "No political evil can reasonably be feared from the spread of Christianity now, for it has been publicly preached in different parts of Bengal for about twenty years past,* without the smallest symptom of the kind."

* Though Mr. Carey had been there only thirteen years; yet Mr. Thomas had publicly preached to the Hindoos in their own language for several years before.

"But are the Baptist Missionaries," he asks, "or their Society at home, authorised by law to determine whether or not a political evil is to be reasonably feared from the spread of Christianity in India?" (p. 69.) Unless our being Baptists deprives us of the right of all other subjects, we have just the same authority as Major Scott Waring, who also has said a great deal to Government on what is reasonable and unreasonable. He states what he conceives to be good policy, submitting it to the consideration of those who are authorised to determine it; and we have done no more.

But the principal materials which our author finds in the Baptist Statement, are such as to enable him to accuse us, as he thinks, of *falsehood*, and even of *rebellion*. These are certainly very serious charges, and if we be unable to answer them, must sink us in the estimation of all honest men.

For our parts, we are not conscious of having been guilty of either of these crimes. So far as we know our own hearts, we have from the beginning exercised a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. If we be guilty, therefore, we must be under the grossest self deception. And as we never considered ourselves either as *liars* or *rebels*, neither have we been able to learn that any other person, high or low, Churchman or Dissenter, friend or enemy, has so considered us, till Major Scott Waring made the discovery.

"Not a single instance of disturbance has occurred," says Mr. Carey, unless the abusive language of a few loose persons may be so called." To prove the falsehood of this statement, the Major refers to the old story of *a universal alarm* being excited by their entering into a city or a village. One of these statements, he says, must be *false*. But if the alarm mean nothing more than a sensation of fear arising from the presence of Europeans, there is no such thing as *disturbance* included in it, Our author has read the account of the journey to Sangur;* and might have observed, that the people were surprised to see Europeans amongst them, and that some appeared *afraid*: yet at that time their errand was

* Periodical Accounts, No. XIV. p. 513.

unknown. This *fear*, therefore, could not respect them as Missionaries, but merely as Europeans.

Mr. Carey says further, that "the Missionaries on the coast reckoned about forty thousand persons to have embraced Christianity." "This," says the Major, "is another direct false assertion. Dr. Kerr admits, on the 7th of Nov. 1806, that *hitherto it is generally imagined few good converts have been made.*" (p. 70.) But though this might be *generally imagined*, yet it does not follow that it was true, or that Dr. Kerr thought it to be true. Or granting that he did, he might mean it only comparatively. Forty thousand people are but few when compared with the population of the country. In the letter addressed to Dr. Vincent, which was published in the Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, of 1800, they are reckoned at three thousand;" and since that time, according to the Reports of that Society, there have been great accessions; whole villages casting away their idols, and embracing the gospel. Whether forty thousand be a just estimate, I cannot tell, and Mr. Carey does not determine; but till I have some better proof of his want of veracity than has yet appeared, I entertain no doubt of its being agreeable to the information he had received.

Thousands of heathens in Calcutta were willing to hear the gospel; but we, says Mr. Marshman, "are forbiden to preach it." That is, in Calcutta, where they had preached it. "This assertion says the Major, "is false; they are allowed to preach it in Serampore, and in their own house in Calcutta," But the thousands who desire to hear it could not attend in either of those places. If Major Scott Waring want understanding, who can help it? But he should not charge that as false which arises from his own misconstructions.

To say that thousands of heathens are willing to hear the gospel, is he says, "a false and wicked assertion, in the way in which the Missionaries desire to be understood. Curiosity may draw, as it has done, thousands together to hear these men preach, but they are not likely to use the elegant expression of one of the coast Missionaries, to catch one (of the thousands) in the Gospel net." (p. 72.) The Missionaries never desired to be understood as if thousands stood ready to embrace Christianity, but merely that

they were willing, and even desirous to hear it it ; and this, whatever were their motives, was the the truth. As to the improbability of their being brought to believe it, that is only Major Scott Waring's opinion, and stands for nothing.

"We have baptised," says Mr. Marshman, "about a hundred of these people, and we dare affirm that the British Government has not a hundred better subjects, and more cordial friends among the natives of Hindostan." "This," says the Major, "is a most atrocious falsehood. Of their hundred converts whom they have baptised in thirteen years,* they have dismissed many for gross immorality." (p. 73.) The number of those who have been dismissed for gross immorality, however, is not so great as this writer would have thought it to be ; but be it what it may, Mr. Marshman says, in the same page, "If they lose cast, and embrace Christianity, not by force, but from pure conviction, they become other men. *Even those who, as it may prove, have not embraced it cordially, are considerably influenced by it. If once they lose cast, the charm is broken, and they become capable of attachment to Government.*

But I am weary of contending with this foul opponent. It is time to bring this part of the subject, at least, to a close. As "the most atrocious falsehood" is charged on the Missionaries, let us here come to an issue. We will not shrink from it. Let our judges satisfy themselves of the truth of our statements. We will hold ourselves obliged, whenever called upon by proper authority, to give proof of them. If falsehood be found on our side, let our Missionaries be ordered out of the country as a set of impostors ; but if on the side of our accusers, let the burden which they have laboured to fasten upon us, fall upon themselves.

But our Missionaries are accused not only of falsehood, but with being "in open rebellion." This accusation is founded on their going out without legal authority, and by foreign ships;—on their availing themselves of the protection of Denmark;—and on their itinerating in the country without passports, and after a legal permission to do so, was refused them.

* He might have said in six.

It is easy to perceive that on this subject, the hopes of our accusers begin to brighten. Like the Pharisees and the Herodians, he thinks he shall be able to entangle us, and bring us under the displeasure of Government. Well, let him do his utmost. We acknowledge the above to be facts, let them affect us as they may. It is worthy of notice, however, that it is not owing to any thing which our accuser has written that these facts have been brought to light. The substance of them was contained in the *Statement;* which Statement, was, in fact, though not in form, respectfully submitted to the very parties to whom he wishes to accuse us. He is, therefore, a day too late. Our judges were in possession of the facts before he knew of them. There is nothing left for him to do as an accusor, but merely as a counsel, to assist the Judges in forming a decision, by his comments and learned arguments. And with respect to these, we must take the liberty of wiping off a part of his colouring; and truly it can be only a part, for to remove the whole, the pamphlet itself must be literally purified by fire.

The itinerating excursions, subsequent to the refusal of a legal permission in 1805, were not in *defiance* of Government, but with their knowledge, and, I may say their approbation. The refusal of the Governor-General did not appear to rise from any disapprobation of the object, or of the means used to accomplish it; but merely from a hesitation whether the Government in India were warranted *formally* to adopt the measure. There was no prohibition whatever at that time laid upon the Missionaries, nor any intimations of even a wish for them to relax in their itinerating labours. On the contrary, when, from the hesitation before mentioned, the Governor-General disapproved of a committee to superintend the translations, he nevertheless gave full liberty to advertise in the Gazette for voluntary subscriptions; and added, "Let the Missionaries go on in their present line of action."

Our accuser, not knowing what to do with this last sentence, contrives to throw it back a year, supposing the remark must have been made prior to the autumn of 1805." (p. 93.) Certainly this supposition is necessary for his argument; but unfortunately it is not true. I cannot exactly refer to the date, but have no

doubt of its being in 1806. Never till the 24th of August in that year, was any thing like a prohibition given, and then it appears to have arisen more from apprehension than dislike; and consisted not in a written order from the Governor-General in Council, but merely in a private verbal message. If, therefore, the Major flatter himself that Sir George Barlow is of the same mind with him and his party, he may find himself mistaken.

I may add, that the protection of the Danish Government was granted at the unsolicited recommendation of the late Governor Bie, whose testimony to the good character of the Missionaries was not only sent to his own Government at Copenhagen, but the same thing conveyed in a letter to the Society in England in the following terms:—"Permit me to assure you, that I do not consider the friendship and few civilities I have had it in my power to show your brethren here, otherwise than as fully due to them. I have received them as righteous men, in the name of righteous men; and I shall never withhold good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of my hand to do it. I am happy in possessing them, and will be more so in seeing their number increase."—The Missionaries have always acknowledged the kindness of the British as well as of the Danish Government; and though at one period they expressed their concern at being forbidden to preach to the multitudes who were willing to hear in Calcutta, yet neither they nor the Society have dealt in reflections, but have contented themselves with simply stating the facts, and the arguments arising from them; and this merely to counteract the underhand measures of their adversaries.

We only ask for a calm and candid hearing. We solemnly aver before God and our country, that we are most sincerely attached to its Constitution and Government; that we regard its authority with sentiments of the highest respect, and hold ourselves bound to be obedient to its lawful commands. Obedience to the ruling powers we conceive to be enjoined in scripture; where, however, an exception is expressly made in favour of those cases in which the commands of man are directly opposed to the revealed commands of God. These are cases which, in the course of human affairs, may occur; but which no good subject will love to an-

ticipate before their actual occurrence. Supposing, however, the arrival of an emergence so painful, it surely would be somewhat harsh to stigmatize with the name of "open rebellion" the reluctant disobedience, in a particular instance of those, who are only yielding to a deliberate, sober, and conscientious conviction of their duty. The apostles exhorted all Christians, rather than renounce their faith or disobey the divine precepts at the command of the state, to "resist even unto blood;" but we have yet to learn that such injunctions were intended or received as instigations to *rebellion*.

Were it possible to conceive (we merely suppose the case) that the Missionaries should be called to the hard duty of deciding between the service of God and obedience to man, we trust that they would be enabled to encounter, with resignation, the painful sacrifice imposed upon them; but we are thankful to say that they have as yet been spared so severe a trial.

Surely, nothing but the most uncandid and bitter prejudice would represent the refusal of an official sanction to their itinerations as an imperative prohibition of them; or would class the Missionaries as rebels merely because being denied the formal protection of the governing power, they were content with connivance, or at least with uncovenanted toleration. Numbers of Europeans are to be found residing in India, though unaccredited by the company or the British Governments; and we have never understood that all these were considered as in a state of "open rebellion." Yet we have no objection to be explicit, and will be free to confess that the legality of such a residence for the purposes of private emolument would in our view be more than doubtful, and that we should certainly abstain from it.

If upon a candid consideration of all circumstances, it be found that we have in some instances deviated from the regulations alluded to, it will be remembered that it has not been for any object of temporal advantage, the illicit pursuit of which it was doubtless the design of those regulations to prevent, though they are necessarily expressed in terms which give them a more general application. As far, indeed, as the deviation may, even under these circumstances, seem an irregular proceeding, so far we should certainly rest our defence of it

on the nature and importance of the objects which it was intended to compass; and in this mild and qualified case, should even appeal to the spirit of the principle which has been already mentioned—the principle of a conscientious preference of duty to all other considerations, however pressing.

With respect to the question of duty, we are aware that men may be prompted by delusive impulses and erroneous comments to measures of extravagance, justly censurable by civil authority. But we are governed by no such impulses. We have no notion of any thing being the will of God, but what may be proved from the scriptures; nor of any obligations upon us to go among the heathen more than upon other Christians. If we be not authorized by the New Testament, we have no authority. And as to our *comments*, if they will not bear the test of fair and impartial scrutiny, let them be discarded, and let our undertakings be placed to the account of a well-meant but misguided zeal. The principal ground on which we act is confined to a narrow compass: it is the commission of our Saviour to his disciples, *Go—teach all nations;* which commission we do not consider as confined to the apostles, because his promise! presence to them who should execute it extends *to the end of the world.*

Our accuser is aware that the apostles and primitive ministers went every where preaching the gospel, even though it were at the risk of liberty and life; and this, he conceives, was right in them, because "they were expressly *commanded* to do so. (p. 80.) His conclusion, that it was wrong in Christians of the present day, rests upon the supposition that the command of Christ does not extend to them; but we shall not allow him to build on these disputed premises.

That there were things committed to the apostles, *for them to commit to Christians of succeeding ages*, cannot be denied. Such must have been the great body of Christian doctrines and precepts contained in the New Testament; and, seeing the promise of Christ to be with his servants in the execution of the command reaches *to the end of the world*, the command itself must have been of this description. Not that every Christian is obliged to preach or any Christian in all places: but the Christian church as a body,

and every member of it individually, is obliged to do its utmost in the use of those means which Christ has appointed for the disciplining of all nations.

To say, that because we are not endowed, like the Apostles, with the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles, therefore we are not obliged to make use of the powers which we have for the conversion of the world, is trifling, not reasoning. What proof, or appearance of proof is there, that the obligations of the apostles to preach the gospel to all nations arose from those extraordinary endowments? If our being unable to work miracles be a reason why we should not preach the gospel to all nations as far as opportunity admits, it is a reason why we should not admit it at all: or, which is the same thing, a proof that the Christian ministry, as soon as miracles had ceased, ought to have terminated. The institution of the Christian ministry is founded in the commission, even that commission which enjoins the teaching of all nations. And if we leave out one part, we must, to be consistent, leave out the other. We ought either not to teach at all, or according to our powers and opportunities, to teach all nations.

If we believe the scriptures, (and if we do not we are not Christians,) we must believe that all nations are promised to the Messiah *for his inheritance*, no less than the land of Canaan was promised to the seed of Abraham; and we, as well as they, ought in the use of those means which he has appointed, to go up and endeavour to possess them. It is not for us, having obtained a comfortable footing in Europe, like the Israelites in Canaan, to make leagues with the other parts of the world, and, provided we may but live at ease in our tents, to consent for them to remain as they are. Such a spirit though complimented by some as liberal, is mean, and inconsistent with the love of either God or man.

Our accuser (who will neither be a Christian, nor let Christianity alone) represents the apostles as "authorized to act in *defiance* of magistrates," to "break the laws of the different countries they visited," and to *despise* the orders of men:" "But Christians *now*," he tells us, "are expressly directed to *obey the powers that be*." If the principle acted on by the apostles "be admitted in

these days," he thinks, "we must bid adieu to India." (pp. 53. 79, 80.)

It would seem, by this account of things, as if the apostles, under a divine authority, trampled on all law and order among men, and, as far as their influence extended, actually "turned the world upside down." If it were not so, the conclusion that the same principle acted upon in these days, would prove the loss of India, is mere unfounded assertion. But were any such effects produced by the labours of the apostles? What colonies were lost to the Romans through them? Let the countries be named which were ruined or injured by their preaching.

In attempting to fix a charge upon us, our accuser has libelled the apostles, and even their master, as well as the Christians of all succeeding ages. Where did he learn that Jesus Christ authorized his apostles to act in defiance of magistrates, or to despise the orders of men? What proof has he that they ever acted on such principle? was there any thing like this in the behaviour of Paul, before Felix, or Festus, or Agrippa? Such a spirit had no more place in his religion than our accuser has been able to prove it to have had place in ours. The apostles were commanded to break no laws, but such as were inconsistent with their allegiance to Christ; and in breaking them they never acted with contumacy, but merely as impelled by a superior authority; bearing at the same time, the consequences with meekness and fortitude, as their Lord had done before them. The principle on which they acted was that which HE had laid down for them when tempted by certain "hypocrites," with the intent of rendering him obnoxious to government; (not that they cared for government, but were desirous of making it the instrument of their malice,) namely, *Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.*

What authority has our accuser for representing the apostles as enjoining on common Christians that subjection to civil government which they did not exemplify in their own conduct? Were not they themselves subject to the powers that were? Yes, in every thing, save in what concerned their allegiance to Christ, and this reserve they made for all Christians. Why else did they en-

courage them to hold fast their profession under the most cruel persecutions; referring them to the last judgment, when God would recompense rest to them, and tribulation to those that troubled them? Could they have submitted their consciences to the ruling powers, they need not have suffered persecution: but they acted on the same principle as the apostles, who, instead of laying down one law for themselves and another for them, exhorted them to follow their example: *Those things*, said they, *which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in us, do.*

On the principle of our accuser, all those Christians of the first three centuries, who had not the power of working miracles, though peaceable and loyal subjects in civil concerns, yet not submitting their consciences to the ruling powers, were rebels. The same may be said of the English Martyrs in the days of the first Mary. They could not work miracles any more than we, and pretended to no special commission from heaven to break the laws: but while they manifested the utmost loyalty to the queen in civil matters, they felt themselves accountable to a higher authority, and submitted to be burnt alive rather than obey her mandates. These characters, whom all succeeding ages have revered as men of whom the world was not worthy, were loaded by the Bonners and Gardiners of the day with every epithet of abuse, and treated as rebels.

We may be told that the cases are dissimilar: they were put to death, but the whole that our accuser aims at is banishment; they suffered for avowing their religious principles at home, whereas we might have done this without his wishing to interrupt us. But this dissimilarity relates only to degree; the principle is the same. If, since the days of miracles, Christians have been under an obligation to submit to the powers that be, in religious matters, the martyrs of seventeen hundred years have been, in fact, a succession of rebels.

Our accuser may think it a matter "not to be endured," that sectaries should compare themselves with these honoured char-

acters:* but with his leave, or without it, we are *Christians;* and though we should be less than the least of Christ's servants, yet we must aspire to act upon the same *principles* as the greatest of them.

What is there in these principles which affects the honours of government, or the peace and good order of society? Is it any disparagement to the highest human authorities not to interfere with the divine prerogative? On the contrary, is it not their highest honour to respect it? Those governments which, disregarding such men as our accuser, protect the free exercise of religious principle, will not only be prospered of heaven, but will ever stand high in the esteem of the wise and the good, and when the ferment of the day is over, be applauded by mankind in general.

A great deal is said, by all our opponents, on *the power of working miracles*, as though because we cannot pretend to this qualification, we had no warrant to attempt the conversion of the heathen, "It is not to be endured," says our accuser, "that these men should be compared with the apostles who wrought miracles." Another wiseacre gravely suggests, that "sectaries are not likely to have" these extraordinary powers; as though, had we been Churchmen, we might have stood some chance of attaining them! † It was the commission of Christ, and not the power of working miracles, that constituted the warrant of the apostles to *go and teach all nations*. The latter was, indeed, an important qualifica-

* Considering the pains which have been taken to load us with the odium of *sectarianism*, it may be thought I should have done something towards removing it. The truth is, our opponents care not for the Church, nor have they any dislike to Dissenters, provided they be averse to *evangelical religion*. All that they say, therefore, against us as sectaries, is for the mean and crafty purpose of working upon the prejudices of Churchmen; and such vulgar abuse requires no answer.

† This suggestion is contained in a piece which has lately appeared, under the title of *The Dangers of British India, from French Invasion and Missionary Establishments*. I see nothing in the pamphlet which requires an answer. Government will see to that part which refers to the danger of French Invasion, whether they read this performance, or not; and as to what relates to the Missionaries, it is a mere repetition of things which have been answered in the preceding pages.

tion, and necessary to accredit the Christian religion at its outset; but if it had been necessary to its progress, it would either have been continued till all nations had been evangelized, or the promise of Christ to be with his servants in the execution of the commission would not have extended to the end of the world.

If we arrogated to compare ourselves with the apostles, in distinction from other Christians, that, indeed, were not to be endured: but nothing is farther from our minds. If we compare ourselves with the apostles, it is not as apostles, but as Christians, engaged, according to the gifts which we possess, in the same common cause. That there were some things pursued by Christ and his apostles which require to be pursued by all Christians cannot be denied. Why else is our Saviour said to have *left us an example that we should follow his steps?* And why did the Apostle exhort the Corinthians to be *followers of him, as he also was of Christ?* It might have been said of Paul, that for him to compare himself with Christ "was not to be endured; and that with equal justice as this is said of us. He did not compare himself with Christ, though he imitated him in those things wherein he was set for an example; neither do we compare ourselves with the apostles, though we imitate them in those things wherein they are set for our example.

Nothing is more evident to men who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, than that the cause of God is the same in all ages; and that whatever diversity of gifts there may be among Christians, there is but one spirit. It is not on that wherein Christianity is diverse in different ages that we found our comparisons, but on that wherein it is the same in all ages. Whatever diversities there were as to spiritual gifts, between Christ and his apostles, or among the apostles themselves, yet they each incurred the hatred and opposition of wicked men. The Lord of Glory himself was reproached as a *madman*, and the people who attended to him considered as fools for listening to his doctrine. He was also accused to government of *stirring up the people*, merely because he taught them throughout the country. Such also was the treatment of the apostles. So foreign were the things of which Paul discoursed, from all the previous ideas of Festus, that though

he spake only the words of truth and soberness, yet they appeared to the other to be *madness*. And the charges alleged against him, at another time, before Felix, were, that he was *a pestilent character, a mover of sedition*; and what was worse still, *a ringleader of the* SECT *of the Nazarenes*. Now when we hear the same charges, for substance, alleged against us, at a distance of almost two thousand years, we cannot help concluding, that whatever disparities there are between Christ and the apostles, and Christians of the present day, there are certain common points of likeness, and that all such reproaches prove nothing against us.

We do not wonder, however, that our adversaries should not be able to "endure these comparisons; for they not only feel annoyed by them, but must needs perceive that if *we* are compared to Christ and his apostles, *they* also will be compared to men of a very opposite character, and this they may not be able to "endure" any more than the other.

Another subject on which almost all our opponents dwell is, the *impracticability* of converting the Hindoos. Most of them, as if to screen themselves from the suspicion of being averse to Christianity, acknowledge, that if the thing were practicable, it would be right. But, in the first place, they speak as though we expected the sudden conversion of the whole population of India; and as though nothing were done, unless it amounted to this: but we have no idea of the kind. If the work go on in a silent and gradual way, like the operations of a little leaven, as the kingdom of heaven has been used to go on, the whole lump may, in the end, though not at present, be leavened. We say the leaven has begun to operate, and all we desire is, that that operation may not be impeded. We perfectly agree with our opponents, that the Hindoos can never be converted by mere *human means*, though we are equally persuaded they will never be converted without them. We no more think that "men can accomplish it" than they. We do not use such calculations respecting the expulsion of Paganism and Mahometanism from India as might be used concerning the reduction of a country by a certain degree of physical force. Our hope arises from the promise of Christ, to be with his servants in the execution of their mission to the end of the world. Nor can our

adversaries consistently object to this, since they also can talk of "the omnipotent power of heaven leading these people into the paths of light and truth," and even of "the outpouring of the Spirit" upon them. The difference is, they introduce divine influence as something miraculous, and for the purpose of superseding human means; we as an ordinary blessing, promised to the church in all ages, and to encourage the use of means. They argue from what the Almighty *can* do, to what he *must* do, if ever the work be done; namely, convert them "in an instant:" we consider such talk as wild and visionary. Our opponents sometimes declaim against the "enthusiasm" of the Missionaries; but nothing like this will be found in any of their communications. Surely they must be hardly driven or they would not have attempted to conceal their opposition to the progress of the gospel under the mask of fanaticism.

Do they really think it more probable, that God will convert a whole country "in an instant," than that they will be converted in the ordinary use of means? No, they expect no such divine interference, and, it may be, on this very account give it the preference. If the Hindoos *must* be converted, they had rather, it seems, that it should be done by the immediate power of God than by us; but it requires no great depth of penetration to perceive that it would please them better still were it to be done by neither.

REMARKS

ON

"A LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL, ON THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA."

My design in noticing this Letter is more for the purpose of explanation than dispute. The "hints" suggested to those who are concerned in sending out Missionaries to the East, so far as they relate to their peaceable temper and character, are very good. I can say, in behalf of the Societies which have of late years sent out Missionaries to that quarter, that it has been their aim, from the beginning, to act on the principle which the author recommends. The following are extracts from the Instructions of the London and the Baptist Societies.

To the Missionaries going to Surat.

"It is peculiarly incumbent on you for your own comfort, and agreeable to the spirit and teaching of our Divine Master, to avoid all interference, both in word and in deed, with the Company's servants, government, and regulations. We cannot sufficiently convey what we feel on the high importance of this injunction, of abstaining from all observations on the political affairs of the country or government, in your intercourse, and in your correspondence. The very existence of the mission may be involved in an attention, or inattention, to this regulation!"

To the Missionaries going to Bengal.

"Since that kingdom which we, as the disciples of Jesus, wish to establish, is not of this world, we affectionately and seriously enjoin on each Missionary under our patronage, that he do cautiously and constantly abstain from every interference with the political concerns of the country where he may be called to labour, whether by words or deeds; that he be obedient to the laws in all civil affairs; that he respect magistrates, supreme and subordinate, and teach the same things to others: in fine, that he apply himself wholly to the all-important concerns of that evangelical service to which he has so solemnly dedicated himself."

"Lastly: However gross may be the idolatries and heathenish superstitions that may fall beneath a Missionary's notice, the Society are, nevertheless, persuaded, that both the mutual respect due from man to man, and the interests of the true religion, demand that every Missionary should sedulously avoid all rudeness, insult, or interruption, during the observance of the said superstitions; recommending no methods but those adopted by Christ and his apostles, viz. the persevering use of scripture, reason, prayer, meekness, and love."

The Societies may not, in every instance, have succeeded according to their wishes; but if any of their Missionaries have betrayed another spirit, they have not failed to admonish them, and if they could not be corrected, would certainly recall them. The mildness and gentleness of Missionaries, however, does not require to be such as that they should not *refute and expose the evils of idolatry*. No man can be a Missionary who is not allowed to do this. This has been always done by Mr. Schwartz and his colleagues, (whom the author of the Letter justly praises,) as is manifest from their communications to *The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, and of which the Society have approved by communicating them to the public.

"Mr. Kolhoff," say they, in his intercourse with heathens, made it his business to give them a plain and comprehensive view of all the truths of our holy religion, and to prevail upon them to

receive them, *by representing the absurdity and sinfulness of their idol-worship,* the happiness which would attend their obedience to the truth, *and the judgments to which they would render themselves liable by a contempt of the only true God, and the offers of his mercy.*" Report of 1798, p. 134.

They also tell us of Mr. Pohle, another of their Missionaries, "preaching daily the principles of Christianity to the natives, of different religions, and especially the heathens, *refuting at the same time their errors.*" Yet he is said to have been "heard with joy and amazement." Report of 1796, p. 129.

The following extract of Mr. Kolhoff's letter will furnish an apology for their earnestness, to those who may think nothing to be proper but simple instruction.

"Besides a multiplicity of superior deities, the heathens in this country have a great number of *infernal deities,* (or rather, *devils,*) whom they likewise make objects of their adoration. The worship, or service done to these infernal deities, in order to render them propitious, consists in offering them sheep, swine, fowls, rice, plantains, and intoxicating liquors, which is always done either in a garden, or in a chapel built in a grove, without the city or village. After offering the sacrifice, the priest, with the people by whom the sacrifice is brought, sit down to feast themselves on the things offered.

"Such a sacrifice was offered by some heathens in the month of July last, near a village twelve miles to the south of Tanjore. Having offered their sacrifice, they sat down to the succeeding entertainment, in which the priest, having made too free with the intoxicating liquor, very soon became like a wild beast, and murdered two persons who were near him, with the instrument with which he had killed the victims. Others endeavored to save themselves by flight, but he pursued after them, murdered a woman, wounded six others, and very likely would have proceeded in his murderous business, if the inhabitants of the village had not brought him down with their sticks, and disabled him from doing further mischief. He was taken a prisoner to Tanjore, and died in his confinement, of the wound he got from the inhabitants. Oh, that the heathens would open their eyes to see the dreadful conse-

quence of forsaking their Maker, and doing the devil's drudgery!" Report of 1798, p. 132.

"I believe," says the author of the Letter to the President of the Board of Control, "that in Bengal the matter has been much the same as on the Coast, and that no dissatisfaction has, for perhaps a century, been produced by the preaching of the Missionaries, Catholic or Protestant, with the exception of only a recent instance of disgust, very naturally excited among some Hindoos, from being (if I am rightly informed) coarsely reproached by some vulgar zealot, with the worship of *murderers*, *liars*, and so forth." (pp. 9, 10.)

I very much suspect that this gentleman *has* been misinformed, as to this exception. No such communication has reached me; and if any one of the Missionaries had, by the use of such language, excited disgust, I think either myself, or some other member of the Society, would have heard of it. If it were "*fact*, and a matter of *notoriety* in India," it is somewhat extraordinary that when, on account of the alarms produced by the Vellore mutiny, Mr. Carey and his colleagues were *requested* to desist from preaching to the natives, the magistrates at Calcutta, who delivered that request, should have made no mention of it; and still more so that they should have declared themselves "well satisfied with their character and deportment," acknowledging that "no complaint had ever been lodged against them." But the number of private reports which have of late been circulated, is sufficient, for a time, to shake the confidence even of those who are friendly to the object. We can only repeat what we have said before, 'Let us not be judged by private letters: let our adversaries come forward and accuse the Missionaries; or at least give proof of their labour's having been injurious.'

There is, doubtless, a manner of representing things which tends not to convince, but to provoke. If any thing of this kind can be proved against the Missionaries, we shall by no means defend it. To charge a company of Hindoos directly with the worship of murderers, liars, &c. must be very improper; but it is possible for a charge of this kind to be urged in a less offensive manner. Supposing a brahman to be in the company, and that in encountering

the Missionary, he should appeal to the shasters for the lawfulness of idol worship; would it be improper for the Missionary calmly to prove from those shasters that the very gods which they command to be worshipped are there described as the most vicious characters? This, I believe has been done, and that with good effect. Nor did I ever hear of an instance of any Hindoo being provoked by it, except the brahmans, who were thereby confounded before the people.

With respect to inculcating "the less controverted principles of Christianity," I do not believe that the Missionaries have ever so much as mentioned to the converted natives, and certainly not to the unconverted, any of the controversies of the European Christians. On the contrary, they teach them what they conceive to be simple Christianity, both in doctrine and practice; and were any thing like a disputatious spirit to arise among them, (which, I believe has never been the case,) they would utterly discourage it.

The fears which this writer seems to entertain of "confounding the people with a variety of discordant opinions and sects;" are I trust, without foundation: but as I shall have occasion to notice this subject more particularly in the next article, I shall here pass it by.

What this author means, and who he can refer to, by "churches overflowing with converts, who do no honour to the cause, but serve rather as a stumbling block, than an incitement to the conversion of others," I know not. Major Scott Waring, in his *third* pamphlet, understands him as agreeing with him, that "the hundred converts made in thirteen years by the *Bengal Missionaries*, have injured the cause of Christianity in India." (p. 136.) After this, I must say, the author is called upon by every consideration of truth, justice, and religion, and in the name of each I hereby call upon him, through some public medium, to explain his meaning. The accusations of Major Scott Waring, and his associates, reflect no dishonour; but when taken up as sober truth by a writer who appears to be not only a man of veracity, but friendly to religion, they become of consequence, and require to be either substantiated or retracted.

We may have more hope in the conversion of the Hindoos, and consequently more zeal than this author. We certainly do hope by the good hand of God upon us, to produce something more than merely "an increased esteem for Christianity" among the heathen: but so far as his advice goes to recommend temperate men and measures, it meets our cordial approbation.

The writer recommends to Government that "the number of Missionaries should be limited, and that they should be required to enter into covenants with the company, calculated to insure their prompt obedience to the restraints which it may be found necessary to impose upon them." It is possible this gentleman may have formed his idea of the number of Missionaries from the reports circulated in such pamphlets as those of Major Scot Waring, as if "a great number of sectarian Missionaries were spread over every part of India." If he had known that this great number does not exceed *sixteen;* and that the greater part of them reside at Serampore, under the immediate eye of the supreme government, he would scarcely have thought of such a proposal. As to "covenanting with the Company," the quotation from Mr. Marshman,* proves their willingness to give every possible security for their peaceable and good behaviour.

The sum of this gentleman's advice is, that that "with the growing zeal of this country for Indian conversion, the vigilant control of the India Government should keep pace." A vigilant control and a system of intolerance sound very much alike. I hope, however, he does not mean such control as would impede the work itself: and if no more be meant than a restriction from intemperate language and behaviour, such restraints, I trust, will not "be found necessary to be imposed upon them."

* See *Part* I. pp. 289, 290, of this volume.

REMARKS

ON

THE PROPRIETY OF CONFINING MISSIONARY UNDERTAKINGS TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH, IN ANSWER TO DR. BARROW.*

I AM aware that on this part of the subject I have strong prejudices to encounter, especially from those who know little or nothing of Protestant Dissenters, except from the opprobrious names given them by their adversaries.

Of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for India, I say nothing. We shall rejoice in the success of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Whether such an establishment take place, or not, I am persuaded no force will be used towards the natives; and I should not have suspected a desire to exclude Protestant Dissenters, had it not been expressly avowed in a late discourse before one of our Universities.* There are thousands, I am persuaded, in the National Church, who would utterly disapprove of the illiberal wish, and whose hearts would revolt at the idea of recalling men of approved talents and character, who, with great labour and perseverance, have in a measure cleared the ground and sown the seed, to make way for others to go after them who should reap the harvest. Attached as they are to the Church of England, they would not wish, in this manner to promote her interests. They would, I presume, consider such a measure as strictly *sectarian;* that is, establishing a party at the expense of the general interest of the church of Christ.

* See Dr Barrow's Sermon before the University of Oxford, Nov. 8, 1807 pp. 13, 14

But should Churchmen of this description be out-numbered by others of a different mind, we appeal from them to the temperance, the wisdom, and the justice of GOVERNMENT. A Government distinguished by its tolerant principles, and which guards the rights of conscience even in Mahometans and heathens, will not we trust, exclude Protestant Dissenting Missionaries from any of its territories, especially men of learning and character, against whom not a single charge of improper conduct has ever been substantiated.

Dr. Barrow says "Missionaries of various interests, or parties, ignorantly or wilfully differing in their comments, their opinions, and their designs, should not be suffered to appear amongst those whom we wish to convert." Surely Dr. Barrow might have supposed, from the disinterested labours of these Missionaries, and from the good understanding which they have always endeavoured to cultivate with Christians of other denominations, that they had no "design" in view but that of extending the Christian religion; but that if they differ from him, or others, in some particulars, it may arise from other causes than either ignorance or obstinacy.

He adds, "If we permit the ministers of various sects and denominations, Lutherans and Calvinists, Armenians and Baptists, to inculcate their respective tenets without restraint, the unlettered Indian, will not be able to determine what that Christianity is which we would persuade him to embrace; and the more learned convinced that the doctrines of all our teachers cannot be equally true, may be led to conclude that all are equally false." Plausible as this reasoning may appear on paper, experience and fact are against it. There never has been and I trust never will be, such an opposition in the doctrine of the Missionaries as to furnish any stumbling-block to the natives. According to the reasoning of this gentleman, if *the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* had sent out an English Clergyman as a Missionary to India, they must at the same time have recalled Schwartz, Gericke, and their fellow labourers, as being "Lutherans."

The errors which exist in the Christian world, to whomsoever they belong, are doubtless an evil, and tend to obstruct the progress of the gospel. Could we be all of one mind, *and that the mind of Christ*, we might hope for greater success; but seeing

this is not the case, what are we to do? Surely there is no necessity for our all sitting idle; nor yet for one party, which happens to be established by civil authority, to exclude the rest.

Let us suppose an *agricultural* mission among the American Indians. Fifteen or sixteen experienced farmers are sent to teach the people how to cultivate their lands. After a few years' trial, some good fruits arise from their instructions. But a certain theorist, sitting at home, finds out that these men are not all perfectly of one opinion as to the best modes of husbandry: and therefore proposes to recall them, and to send others in their place. Common sense would, in this case, check the presumption. It would say, 'Let these men alone. There is no such difference between them as materially to affect the object. There is room enough for them all, so that no one will need to interfere with his neighbour. Even the less skilful among them will do good, perhaps as much as those whom you would send in their place, and who, after all might be as far from unanimity as they are.'

Such is the extent of the British empire in the East, that if we could divest ourselves of the sectarian spirit of "desiring to boast of other men's labours, no two denominations of Christians need interfere, and all might be helpers one of another. But though it were otherwise, and the evils alleged were allowed to arise from it, yet the measures proposed by this writer would not diminish them. It is by subscribing "the creed of the National Church" that he wishes all who engage in this work to be united: but the unanimity produced by subscribing a creed, however good that creed may be, is little more than nominal, and therefore could have no good effect on thinking heathens. They would soon discover that there had been almost as many different "comments and opinions" about the meaning of the creed, as about the scriptures themselves; and that as great an opposition existed among those who had subscribed it, as between them and others who had not subscribed it.

The truth is, if we wish to convert heathens to *ourselves*, we must do as the Church of Rome does, set up for infallibility, and withhold the scriptures from the people, lest they should read and judge for themselves. But if we wish to convert them to *Christ*,

we shall put the scriptures into their hands, *as the only standard of truth*, and teach them to consider all other writings as in no wise binding on their consciences, nor even as claiming regard, any farther than they agree with them. By this rule let them form their judgments of us, and of our differences, should they deem it worth while to inquire into them; but the aim of a true Missionary will ever be to divert their attention from such things, and to direct it to *the truth as it is in Jesus.*

It cannot be very marvellous to them, that fallible men should not be perfectly of one mind. Whether they be Pagans or Mahometans, they know very well that this is not the case with them; and though the Christian religion professes to contain one consistent doctrine, yet it were highly presumptuous to encourage in them the hope of finding this any where in perfection, save in the holy scriptures. However proper it may be for a church to express the leading articles of its faith in a creed, yet to make that creed "A RULE OF CONDUCT, AND A STANDARD OF TRUTH, TO WHICH APPEALS IN DOUBT AND CONTROVERSY ARE TO BE MADE," is to invade the divine prerogative, and to make void the word of God by our traditions. I have too high an opinion of the Reformers to suppose that they ever intended a composition of theirs to take place of the oracles of God. Should such an idea be held up to the Hindoos as that which was delivered in this sermon, it were indeed to cast a stumbling block in their way: but if we be contented in giving them the word of God as *the only standard of faith and practice*, and in being ourselves, in all we say or do among them, measured by it, no material evil will arise to them from our differences.

To this may be added, if no great temptations of a worldly nature be held up as motives, it may be presumed that few will engage in the work but those whom the love of Christ constraineth: but between such men the differences will not be very important; and as they know one another, those differences may be expected to diminish.

Dr. Barrow recommends "one uniform and general attempt, *to the exclusion of all others, where we have the power to exclude*

them, to be made by the ministers of the National Church, under the authority and regulations of an act of the Legislature."

And how many ministers of the National Church does Dr. Barrow think would engage in this undertaking? if there be a sufficient number to justify his proposal, why do they not supply the Episcopal mission on the Coast of Coromandel? The worthy successors of Schwartz have long proclaimed the harvest in India to be great, and the labourers to be few. Scarcely a Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge has appeared since the death of that great man, without calling out for more Missionaries.

"Mr. Gericke," says the Society, "laments the want of more assistance at Tanjore. How happy a thing, he observes, would it be if God were to furnish a faithful Missionary for the assistance of Mr. Kolhoff, and another or two for the congregations southward of Tanjore. It is delightful to see the growth of the Tanjore mission, and the southern congregations dependent on it. The inhabitants of whole villages flock to it. What a pity that there are not labourers for such a delightful harvest! At Jaffna, and all the coast of Ceylon, there is another great harvest. We have sent such of our native catechists as could be spared; but many are required for that extensive work."

Such was the report in 1803; and did any of the ministers of the National Church offer themselves for the service? I believe not; but we are told that "applications had been repeatedly made to the professors at Halle in Saxony, to furnish the Society with some new Missionaries."

The Report in 1804, among other things, gives the cheering intelligence of "the inhabitants of four villages being unanimous in their resolution of embracing the Christian faith; and of their having put away their idols, and converted their temples into Christian Churches." It is added by Mr. Gericke, "It seems that if we had faithful and discreet labourers for the vineyard of the Protestant mission on this coast, to send wherever a door is opened unto us, rapid would be the progress of the gospel."

The following is the answer which the Society was enabled to make to these solemn and impressive calls: "It is with concern

that the Society still has to report that no new suitable supplies of new Missionaries have yet been heard of, to succeed the good men who have finished their course."

If we look to the next year, 1805, we find "The Society cannot yet report that any new Missionaries have been engaged in Europe to carry on the work of promoting Christian knowledge in the East Indies, although many efforts have been used to find out suitable persons to be employed in this labour of love."

In the Report of 1806, the complaints are repeated; but no mention is yet made of any new Missionaries; and none in that of 1807, just published.

I do not reflect upon the English Clergy. There are many among them who, I am persuaded, would willingly engage in any service which appeared to be their duty; but who, from the purest motives, might consider themselves called to labour in another quarter. Neither do I reflect upon the Society: for how can they send out Missionaries till there are Missionaries to be sent? I only ask, how could Dr. Barrow, with these facts before his eyes, preach and write as he did? How could he purpose to take the *whole* work of evangelizing India into the hands of the ministers of the National Church, when that part of it which had a special claim upon them was known to be standing still, in a manner, for want of assistance?

Let there be what excellence there may in the Established Church, (and far be it from me to wish to depreciate it,) it is not from thence *exclusively* that we are to look for the accomplishment of this work. To furnish a sufficient number of suitable men for so great an undertaking, is not in the power of any one denomination, established or unestablished; nor, as I suspect, of the friends of Christianity in all of them united; but if, like her that anointed the Lord's feet, we *do what we can*, we shall be approved.

For many ministers and members of the Established Church I feel a most sincere regard; and sorry should I be to wound their feelings. It is a circumstance that has afforded me pleasure in this otherwise disagreeable controversy, that its tendency is to unite the friends of Christianity in a common cause. If, in my remarks

on the Episcopal Mission in the East, I have seemed to interfere in concerns which do not immediately belong to me, it is because I have found it necessary, in order to repel the propositions of a writer, WHOSE AVOWED INTOLERANCE KNOWS NO LIMITS BUT THE WANT OF POWER!

Whatever this gentleman may allege in behalf of "one uniform and general attempt, to be made by the ministers of the National Church exclusively," *the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* cannot, with any consistency, second the motion. They must know that such a proposal, whatever it may appear on paper, could not be reduced to practice. And surely it is not too much to infer, that if it be right and desirable to introduce Christianity among the Hindoos, others should be allowed to take part in the work as well as they, especially as there is no desire of interfering in any of their labours. Let the Church of England do what it can. Let it send out ministers who are willing to spend and be spent in the work, and we with all our hearts shall pray for their success. From Missionaries of this description we should have no apprehensions. Such men would not wish to "exclude" those who are already employed, whether they could fully accord with them, or not. Their language would be, *Let there be no strife between us, for we are brethren! Is not the whole land before us? If you will go to the left hand, then we will take the right; or if you depart to the right hand, we will go to the left.* Nay, more; their language already is, "GOD BLESS ALL MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS! MAY THE WORK OF GOD PROSPER IN ALL THEIR HANDS!"*

For our parts, observing of late that Christianity itself was powerfully assailed, we have, in a manner, laid aside inferior objects, and made common cause with the Christian world. We have been less attentive to the things in which we differ from other Christians, than to those wherein we are agreed; and to the best of our abilities have joined with them in defending the common faith. Our zeal has not been expended in making proselytes to a party, but in turning sinners to God through Jesus Christ. It was in pur-

* See the Rev. Basil Wood's Sermon, prefixed to the last Report of the Committee of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East. pp. 175—178.

suit of this object that we first engaged in Missionary undertakings. We had no interest to serve but that of Christ. It was in our hearts to do something for his Name among the heathen; and if it might be, to enlarge the boundaries of his kingdom. Such also we know (as far as men can know each other,) were the motives of our brethren, the Missionaries. And now that it hath pleased God in some measure to prosper our way, it is our humble, respectful, and most earnest entreaty . . . . . HINDER US NOT!

We ask not for any temporal advantage, any participation in trade, any share of power, any stations of honour, or any assistance from Government: we ask merely for permission to expend such sums of money as may be furnished by the liberality of Christians, earned chiefly by the sweat of the brow, in imparting the word of life to our fellow-subjects in Hindostan.

APPENDIX.

Extracts of a Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel SANDYS, *who, after twenty-two years service in India, returned in* 1804; *in answer to one addressed to him since the veracity of the Missionaries has been called in question by Major Scott Waring.*

"FROM my acquaintance with Messrs. Carey, Ward, Marshman, &c. before I left India, I feel a repugnance to answer the question on their veracity. I can believe that, as all men are fallible, they, in some of their impressions and relations, may have been mistaken: but as to their veracity, I do not, cannot, dare not doubt it. I can also readily conceive that a common village tumult in India may in England be considered as a very serious affair: but an English mob and an Indian mob are very different things. A Missionary may go with a small boat, thirty or forty miles to a village market, sit down, converse, and afterwards preach. Perhaps some brahman will oppose him. This introduces the Hindoo idolatry; and while he remains calm, they will become vociferous. As he proceeds to his boat, the boys may be encouraged to throw mud at him; but no personal injury follows; and the Missionary, as he is going away, may be asked by a villager when he will come again, and hold conversation with his brahman: but this is all.

"Having served at different times in various staff departments of the army, particularly in Mysore, under the Marquis Cornwallis, I had a great variety of people, of different casts, under my direction, and had full opportunity of observing their customs and manners.

"I never heard of any thing worthy of being called a tumult or disturbance occasioned by the Missionaries while I was in India, which I think I should, if there had been any; and I do not believe

that any of their addresses to the natives, either in words or writing, would produce any serious effect of the kind, provided there were no actual interruption of their customs. At the encampment near Surat, a Bengal brahman seapoy (a soldier of the priest order) went to the river to perform his ablutions, and to say his prayers, according to custom in the water. Another seapoy, of the Bombay establishment, going into the stream before him, at the same time, and for the same purpose, mudded the water. As soon as the brahman perceived it, he instantly left the river, and ran to his battalion, calling out that he was contaminated, and had lost his cast. The respective battalions to which the parties belonged immediately took arms; and had not their officers exerted themselves with great energy and prudence, the consequence must have been dreadful: but through their interference the business was settled.—The Bombay seapoy might have said what he pleased to the brahman, *standing on the bank*. He might have inveighed against him in the most bitter terms, and told him that his cast was better than his: the brahman, I believe, would have returned only a smile of contempt. It is not talking to them, or endeavouring to persuade them, but actual interference that will excite mutiny and disaffection. In all the instances of dissatisfaction, that I remember, this has been the case.

"A little before my return, I and some others were in company with a Christian native, called Petumber a very eloquent man. He told us that he had, in preaching to his countrymen, occasionally met with abuse, but that in general they heard him with attention. In crossing a river, he said, he passed one of his old acquaintances, a brahman, who was washing and praying to his gods, to whom he spoke of the absurdity of his worship. The brahman only pitied him, and told him that with his cast he had lost his senses. Thus they parted, without any thing like anger on either side: but had Petumber passed the stream above him, religious hatred and revenge would have followed. As to talking about religion, they are fond of it: it is only when they are interrupted or contaminated that they are seriously offended."

Extracts of a Letter from WILLIAM CUNINGHAME, *Esq. late Assistant Judge at Dinagepore, on the same occasion as the above.*

"IF Mr. Carey be accused of *falsehood*, and I were called upon to state what I think of this charge, my sensations respecting it would be those of any ingenuous person well acquainted with the great Howard, had he been called upon to vindicate that philanthropist from the charge of *inhumanity*. I am as well convinced as I can be of any thing which is not the subject of consciousness, that Mr. Carey is totally incapable of being guilty of any falsehood or misrepresentation whatever.

"During the last two years of Mr. Carey's residence in the Dinagepore district, he was well known, not only to me, but to all the gentlemen in the Company's Civil service in that station. He possessed, I can safely say, the cordial friendship of some, and the good opinion of all.

"In particular, I know, that the gentleman who held the office of judge and Magistrate of that large and important district had a very high esteem and respect for Mr. Carey's character, which he showed by every proper mark of polite attention. And of that gentleman, the unspotted integrity and the merits, as a public servant, are well known, and have, I believe been acknowledged by every successive government of Bengal, from Lord Cornwallis's to Sir George Barlow's. While Mr. Carey resided in the above district, his conduct was uniformly quiet and irreprehensible; and had it been otherwise, I, from my situation as Register of the civil Court of Dinagepore, and Assistant to the Magistrate, must have known of it.

"After I quitted Dinagepore in 1801, my personal intercourse with Mr. Carey became more frequent. I had also an opportunity of becoming well acquainted with Mr. Ward, and knew Mr. Marshman, though from this last gentleman's being more confined by his duties as a school-master, I seldom saw him.

"I shall say nothing of Mr. Carey's *religion*, because it is not that which is the subject of dispute: but I will say, that the unaffected simplicity of his manners, the modesty of his demeanour,

his good sense and information, his unwearied industry, and the general excellence of his character, did, as far as I had any opportunity of observing, procure to him the esteem of all those Europeans to whom he was known.

"I also frequently conversed with Hindoo and Mahomedan natives, rather of the better sort, upon the subject of Christianity and the probable success of the mission, and they generally discussed these things with much freedom. As far as I can recollect, I never in any conversation of this kind heard Mr. Carey, or any of the other Missionaries, mentioned with disrespect. On the contrary I believe their characters were highly respected even by the natives, who, with all their faults, generally form pretty just estimates of the characters of Europeans who reside among them, and are by no means backward in giving their sentiments thereupon.

"Though I did not personally know the native converts, I can safely affirm, from my acquaintance with the character of the Missionaries, that their testimony respecting those converts ought to be received, and that full credit should be attached to it. It is a most unfounded calumny to assert that the Missionaries have received immoral characters, knowing them to be such, into the church. I am certain they would receive no such characters."

THE

PRINCIPLES

OF THE

PETITIONERS TO PARLIAMENT

FOR

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION IN INDIA:

A LETTER TO

JOHN WEYLAND, Jun. Esq.

OCCASIONED

BY HIS LETTER TO SIR HUGH INGLIS, BART.

ON THE

STATE OF RELIGION IN INDIA

PRINCIPLES OF THE PETITIONERS,* &c.

Sir,

I have read with interest your Letter addressed to Sir Hugh Inglis, Bart. "On the State of Religion in India." Having been for twenty years past the Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Society which sent out the present Dr. Carey and his colleagues, it is natural that I should be interested in whatever may affect the important question now pending in parliament.

The dispassionate, candid, and for the most part judicious strain in which you have written, Sir, deserves acknowledgment. I have no hesitation in saying, it appears to me to come nearer the point at issue than any thing that I have met with.

Those gentlemen who assert that, "as the Hindoos and the Christians worship one great Creator, it is indifferent whether the adoration be offered to him through the pure medium of Christianity, or through the bloody and obscene rites of the Indian idolatry," you very properly deem incompetent to judge on the subject. The British Legislature I trust will never so dishonour itself as to entertain the question whether the Christian religion be preferable to that of Juggernaut.

As to what you have written, Sir, of an *Ecclesiastical Establishment*, that is not my immediate concern; but if it be so conducted as to "take a share in the conversion of the heathen," and do not

* By the title given to these pages, the author means no more than to express his own principles, and what *he conceives* to be the principles of the petitioners in general. Having observed, by conversing with several gentlemen, that the object of the petitions was understood to be something incompatible with the security of Government, he wished, as far as he was able, to remove those impressions, and to give a true statement of what he conceived to be their object

interfere with the labours of those who are unconnected with it, it will be entitled to our Christian regards, no less than our undertakings are to those of modern Episcopalains. The efforts of individuals and societies unconnected with the Establishment, are those which immediately concern me, and a large proportion of the petitioners.

Many of your remarks, on this part of the subject, Sir, are candid and liberal. Your short and conclusive proof that "no danger is to be apprehended from these efforts, because no danger ever *has arisen;* though the practice has been going on for centuries, and during the period many thousands of natives have been converted," must approve itself to every candid and enlightened legislator.

It is here, Sir, that I wish to offer a few remarks on your proposed regulations, and to state what I consider as the principles of the general body of the petitioners.

In order to be a competent judge of the question at issue you reckon a man must be "free from enthusiasm, either for or against Christianity." You do not mean by this that he should be "deficient in a warmth of gratitude for the benefits of Christianity;" but merely that, while he engages in real earnest in the propagation of the gospel, he is not to be regardless of good sense, and sound discretion. That there are enthusiasts of this description is very possible; but I hope to be believed, when I say that, of all the persons I have conversed with on the subject, I have never met with such an one. Persons whose principal attention is turned to the conversion of the heathen, and who are but little acquainted with its political bearings, may dwell more on the former, and less on the latter; but I never heard such an idea as this suggested, that "we have nothing to do but to pour into India all the evangelical knowledge and zeal we can export, and leave the result to Providence." Many of the petitions have expressed a wish for all *prudent* and *peaceable* means to be used; and where this has not been expressed, I believe it has been invariably understood. It is not to *prudence,* Sir, that the petitioners have any objection; but merely to *that species of prudence that would not scruple to subject, nor even to sacrifice Christianity to political expediency.* Ought a

nation, Sir, to set up its power and temporal prosperity as the supreme end, and to require that nothing be done within the sphere of its influence, but what appears consistent with, if not calculated to promote, this end. Is not this to *sit in the seat of God?* See Ezek. xxviii. 1—10.

Dr. Carey and his colleagues, Sir, are acknowledged by Marquis Wellesley, (in a late speech, said to have been delivered in the House of Lords,) to be "*quiet, prudent, discreet, orderly and learned men;*" yet no men on earth are farther from admitting such a principle as the above than they. We may be prudent without being irreligious. Dr. Marshman has proved, that if the British Government be friendly to Christianity, it will by this insure its own prosperity: for "whatever is right is wise:" but to befriend Christianity itself in subserviency to our worldly interest were to turn that which is good unto evil, and instead of "placing us under the divine protection," might be expected to procure our overthrow. If God be what we are in the habit of calling him, the *Supreme Being*, he must be treated as *supreme*, or we cannot hope for his blessing.

You allege, that "the ultimate conversion of these heathens depends, under God, upon the duration of the British dominion." That the British dominion may be the appointed mean of enlightening the eastern world, as the Roman dominion was of enlightening Britain, is readily admitted. This may be the design of Providence in connecting them. It is also allowed that on the supposition of British dominion being used for the amelioration of the condition of the natives, its duration is very desirable, and must needs be desired by the friends of Christianity: but I cannot allow the prevalence of the kingdom of Christ to depend on the duration of *any* earthly government. The duration of a government may depend upon its befriending the kingdom of Christ; but if it refuse to do this, deliverance will arise from another quarter. The great system of God, as revealed in the prophecy, will be accomplished: *the nation and kingdom that refuses to serve him shall perish.*

I am persuaded, Sir, that you have no intention to reduce Christianity to a state of mere subserviency to civil policy, and that if you perceived this consequence to be involved in any thing you

had advanced, you would retract it. "I do certainly," you say, "go a little beyond Machiavel," who was for holding religion in veneration as the means of preserving government. Yet you speak of our being "bound as a Christian country to impart the blessings of Christianity, only *so far as it can be done with safety to our dominion.*" Be assured, Sir, I have no desire to endanger the British dominion, nor the most distant idea that the labours of Missionaries will have any such tendency. If they have, however, it will be an event of which history furnishes no example. But why set up the safety of our dominion as the supreme object, to which every thing else, even the imparting of the blessings of Christianity, must give way? If there be any meaning in our Saviour's words, *He that saveth his life shall lose it*, is not this the way to ruin that very dominion you are so anxious to preserve? It was to prevent the Romans from coming to take away their place and nation that the Jews were persuaded to crucify the Lord of glory; a measure which brought on them the very evil that they dreaded.

Review, Sir, your proposed regulations for confining Missionaries to a particular *district*, and sending them away by a summary power upon proof of any evil consequences, not only arising, but "*likely to arise* from their presence." Does not this suppose that you have *adversaries* to deal with, such as Shimei was known to be by Solomon; who, therefore, must be confined and watched with a jealous eye, and who require to be punished on the ground of mere apprehension? Does it not proceed on the principle that every thing must be subservient to political expediency? Why should you not treat Missionaries as *friends*, till they prove themselves to be enemies? If they prove to be such, let them be sent home at our own expense; or let us be informed, and we will recall them. Of all the Missionaries that have gone to India, how many has the government found that deserved the name of enemies? I believe not one. But their zeal it has been said, may betray them into indiscretions. It may; we have never heard, however, of any such indiscretions as those of which military gentlemen have been guilty, in *cutting off men's beards, and shooting their monkeys.* But allowing that religious zeal may betray them

into some indiscretions, and this we do not deny; yet let them be treated as you would treat a *friend*; that is, let them be told of their indiscretions, of which it may be they are not aware at the time. A few such words would go much further with these men than a jealous eye or severe animadversion. A *friendly feeling*, Sir, in this case, is every thing. Suppose a Missionary stationed up the country; he gives the scriptures to those who ask for them, and preaches, or rather converses with the natives, (for their addresses are not harangues, but are frequently interrupted by inquiries.) The Hindoos are attentive, and desire to hear more; but two or three Mahometans, to whom it is almost natural to be of a bitter persecuting spirit, are displeased, and get a letter of complaints written to Government. If Government be friendly, it will hear both sides before it judges; if not, the Missionary will be immediately ordered away. Such, Sir, appears to be the summary process which your proposed regulations would justify.

Why should imaginary dangers, unfounded in a single fact during the experience, as you say, of centuries, be made the ground of legislative control? Surely, Sir, your apprehensions of "a premature shock being given to the Hindoo opinions," while yet you acknowledge that "no danger ever has arisen," must have been excited by the reiterated representations of those persons whom you reckon incompetent to judge on the question. Why should a course of disinterested labours, which, in every instance of conversion, adds a cordial friend to the British Government, even though it were, like the course of an apostle, to be now and then the innocent occasion of a local disturbance, be viewed with so jealous an eye? out of nearly *five hundred* persons who have embraced Christianity by means of our Missionaries, we fear no contradiction when we say that not one of them has proved himself any other than a loyal and peaceable subject.

If there be any danger of mischief arising from Missionaries it must affect themselves before it can affect Government. In the frolic of the officers who shot the sacred monkeys, Government does not appear to have been so much as thought of; it was their own life, and that only, that was endangered; and so long as Missionaries stand merely on their own ground, receiving no

favour but what is common to good subjects, (and this is all we ask,) it will be the same with them. If any danger arises, it will be to themselves; and of this, after all their experience, they have no apprehensions.

Some gentlemen cannot understand what we mean in our petitions, when we profess obedience to Government in *civil* things only. We mean nothing more than to reserve our consciences for God, according to our Saviour's words, *Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.* We have no reserves but these. Hinder us not in our efforts to carry into execution the commission of Christ, and we are not anxious about other things. We mean by obedience in all civil concerns as much as if we engaged to conduct ourselves in a loyal, orderly and peaceful way. If it be objected that we are liable to act improperly in *religious*, as well as in civil concerns—we answer, if our conduct even in the exercise of religion, be injurious to the peace of society, we should allow this to be a breach of, civil obedience, and have no objection to be accountable for it, only let us not be punished on the ground of mere apprehension nor treated but as being what we are—sincere friends to our country and to our species.

I am, Sir, respectfully yours,

ANDREW FULLER.

STRICTURES

ON

SANDEMANIANISM,

IN

TWELVE LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

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STRICTURES

ON

SANDEMANIANISM, &c.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

My Dear Friend,

I HAVE been told more than once that my not answering the piece written some years since, by Mr. A. M'Lean, has been considered as a proof that I felt it unanswerable. But if so, I must have felt the productions of many other opponents unanswerable, as well as his; for I have seldom had the last word in a controversy. The truth is, I was not greatly inclined to answer Mr. M. I felt disgusted with the illiberality of his repeatedly arraigning my motives, his accusing me of intentional misrepresentation, and his insinuating as though I could "take either side of a question, as I found occasion." I contented myself, therefore, with writing a small tract, called *The Great Question Answered;* in which, while complying with the desire of a friend, I endeavoured to state my views *without controversy;* and as Mr. M. had given a caricature description of what my principles would amount to, if applied in the form of an address to the unconverted, I determined to reduce them to that form; hoping also that, with the blessing of God, they might prove of some use to the parties addressed.

Whether it was owing to this tract, or not, I have reason to believe that the friends of religion who attended to the subject, did

me justice at the time, and that even those who favoured Mr. M.'s side of the question, thought he must have mistaken the drift of my reasoning, as well as have imputed motives to me of which I was innocent.

Whatever Mr. M. may think of me, I do not consider him as capable of either intentional misrepresentation, or taking either side of the question as he may find occasion. That my principles are misrepresented by him, and that in a great number of instances, I could easily prove: but the opinion that I have of his character leads me to impute it to misunderstanding, and not to design.

I am not conscious of any unbrotherly feeling towards Mr. M. In resuming the subject, however, after such a lapse of time, I have no mind to write a particular answer to his performance, though I may frequently notice his arguments. It is in consequence of observing the nature and tendency of the *system*, that I undertake to examine it. Such an examination will not only be more agreeable to my own feelings, but more edifying to the reader, than either an attack on an individual opponent, or a defence of myself against him.

In calling the sentiments I oppose *Sandemanianism*, I mean nothing invidious. The principles taught by Messrs. Glass and Sandeman, about half a century ago, did certainly give a new turn and character to almost every thing pertaining to the religion of Christ, as must appear to any one who reads and understands their publications. In the north it is the former of these authors who gives name to the denomination: with us it is the latter, as being most known by his writings.

I have denominated Sandemanianism *a system;* because it not only, as I have said, affects the whole of Christianity, but induces all who embrace it to separate from other Christians. Mr. Sandeman manifestly desired that the societies which were connected with him should be unconnected with all others, and that they should be considered as the only true churches of Christ. Such a view of things amounts to more than a difference on a few points of doctrine; it is a distinct species of religion, and requires for distinction's sake, to have a name, and till some other is found by which it can be designated, it must be called after that of its author.

It is not my design to censure Sandemanianism in the gross. There are many things in the system which, in my judgment, are worthy of serious attention. If Mr. Sandeman, and his followers, had only taught that faith has revealed truth for its object, or that which is true antecedently to its being believed, and whether it be believed or not; that the finished work of Christ, exclusive of every act, exercise, or thought of the human mind, is that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God; that no qualifications of any kind are necessary to warrant our believing in him; and that the first scriptural consolation received by the believer arises from the gospel, and not from reflecting on the feelings of his own mind towards it; they would have deserved well of the church of Christ.

Whether those against whom Mr. S. inveighs, under the name of *popular preachers*, were so averse to these principles as he has represented them, is another question. I have no doubt, however, but they, and many other preachers and writers of the present times, stand corrected by him and by other writers who have adopted his principles.

Mr. Ecking remarks on some passages in Mr. Boston's *Fourfold State*, with much propriety, particularly on such language as the following: "Do what you can; and it may be while you are doing what you can for yourselves, God will do for you what you *cannot*." Again: "Let us believe as we can, in obedience to God's command, and while we are doing so, although the act be at the beginning but natural, yet, in the very act, promised and purchased grace strikes in and turns it into a super-natural act of believing."* From other parts of Mr. Boston's work, it appears that he did not consider grace as promised to any of the works of the unregenerate; but allowing him, by "promised grace," in this passage, to mean that which was promised to Christ on behalf of those who were given him by the Father, yet the language is unscriptural and dangerous, as giving the sinner to understand that his inability is something that excuses him, and that in doing what he can while in enmity to God he obeys the divine command, and is at least in a more hopeful way of obtaining supernatural grace.

* Essays, p. 33.

The Apostles exhorted sinners to *repent and believe the gospel*, and to nothing short of it ; making no account of their inability. If we follow their example, God may honour their own ordinances by accompanying them with his Holy Spirit ; but as to any thing being done in concurrence with the endeavours of the unregenerate, we have no such idea held out to us in the oracles of God.

It is God's ordinary method, indeed, prior to his bestowing that supernatural grace which enables a sinner to repent and believe the gospel, by various means to awaken him to reflection, and to the serious consideration of his condition as a transgressor of the divine law. Such convictions may last for a considerable time, and may issue in true conversion ; but they may not : and so long as the gospel-way of salvation is rejected, or neglected, in favour of some self-righteous scheme, there is nothing truly good in them. They are as the noise, and the shaking of the dry bones, but not *the breath of life*. They are the means by which God prepares the mind for a welcome reception of the gospel ; but they contain no advance towards Christ on the part of the sinner. He is not nearer the kingdom of heaven, nor less in danger of the wrath to come, than when he was at ease in his sins. Nay, notwithstanding the outward reformation which such convictions ordinarily produce, he is not, upon the whole, a less sinner in the sight of God than he was before. On the contrary, "He who continues under all this light, and contrary to the plain dictates and pressing painful convictions of his own conscience, obstinately to oppose and reject Jesus Christ, is, on the account of this his impenitence and obstinacy under this clear light and conviction of conscience, (whatever alteration or reformation has taken place in him in other respects,) *more guilty, vile, and odious in God's sight than he was before.*"*

For a minister to withhold the invitations of the gospel till he perceives the sinner sufficiently, as he thinks, convinced of sin, and then to bring them forward as something to which he is entitled, holding up his convictions and distress of mind as signs of grace, and persuading him, on this ground, to think himself one of God's elect, and warranted to believe in Christ, as doing worse

* Hopkins's True State of the Unregenerate, p. 6.

than nothing. The comfort which the apostles presented to awakened sinners, consisted purely in the exhibition of Christ, and the invitations to believe in him. Neither the company addressed by Peter, nor the Philipian jailor, were encouraged from any thing in the state of their own minds, though each were deeply impressed, but from the gospel only. The *preachers* might and would take encouragement on perceiving them to be pricked in their hearts, and might hope for a good issue; but it had been at their peril to encourage them to hope for mercy any otherwise than as believing in the Son of God.

The Hyper-calvinists, who set aside the invitations of the gospel to the unregenerate, abound in these things. They are aware that the scriptures do invite sinners of some sort to believe in Christ; but then they conceive them to be sensible sinners only. It is thus that the terms *hunger*, *thirst*, *labour*, *heavy-laden*, &c. as used in the scripture invitations, are considered as denoting *spiritual* desire, as marking out the persons who are entitled to come to Christ. The Gospel invitations should be addressed to sinners *as the subjects of those wants and desires* which it is adapted to satisfy, such as the thirst for happiness, peace, rest, &c. is no more than might be expected. It had been strange if living waters had been presented to them who in *no sense* were thirsty, or rest to them who were in *no sense* weary and heavy-laden: but it does not follow that this thirst and this weariness is *spiritual*. On the contrary, they who are invited to buy and eat without money and without price, are supposed to be "spending their money for that which is not bread;" are admonished as "wicked" men to forsake their way; and invited to return to the Lord under a promise of abundant pardon, on their so returning. The "heavy-laden" also, are supposed as yet not to have *come to Christ*, nor *taken his yoke*, nor *learned his spirit;* and surely it could not be the design of Christ to persuade them to think well of their state, seeing he constantly teaches us that till a sinner come to him, or believe in him, he is under the curse. It is also observable that the promise of *rest* is not made to them as *heavy-laden*, but as *coming to Christ with their burdens*. There is no proof that *all* who were *pricked in their hearts* under Peter's sermon, and who inquired, *What*

shall we do? believed and were saved. On the contrary, it seems to be intimated that only a *part* of them, *gladly received the word, and were baptized.* Had they *all* done so, it would probably have been said, *Then they gladly received his word, and were baptised.* Instead of this it is said, *Then* THEY THAT *gladly received his word were baptised*, &c. implying that there were some who though pricked in their hearts, yet *received not* the word of the gospel; and were not baptised, and who might leave the place under an impression that the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ was a hard saying. There are many it is to be feared who at this day feel guilt to be a heavy burden, and yet never bring it to Christ; but lay it down on some self-righteous resting place, and so perish forever.

It does not follow, however, that *all* convictions of sin are to be resolved into the operations of an awakened conscience. There is such a thing as a conviction of the *evil nature* of sin, and that by a view of the spirituality and equity of the divine law. It was by the *commandment* that Paul perceived sin to be *exceeding sinful.* Such a conviction of sin cannot consist with a rejection of the gospel way of salvation, but, as soon as it is understood, instantly leads the sinner to embrace. It is thus that *through the law, we become dead to the law that we may live unto God.*

I may add, the attention of Christians appears to have been too much drawn towards what may be called *subjective* religion to the neglect of that which is *objective.* Many speak and write as though the truth of the gospel was a subject out of doubt, and as though the only question of importance was, whether they be interested in his blessings; and there are not a few who have no doubt of their believing the former, but many doubts respecting the latter. Hence it is probable, the essence of faith came to be placed, not in a belief of the gospel, but in a persuasion of our being interested in its benefits. If, however, we really believe the one, there is no scriptural ground to doubt of the other; since it is constantly declared that he who believeth in the gospel shall be saved.

If the attention of the awakened sinner, instead of being directed to Christ, be turned inward, and his mind be employed in

searching for evidences of his conversion, the effect must, to say the least, be uncomfortable, and may be fatal; as it may lead him to make a righteousness of his religious feelings, instead of looking out of himself to the Saviour.

Nor is this all: If the attention of Christians be turned to their own feelings, instead of the things which should make them feel, it will reduce their religion to something vastly different from that of the primitive Christians. Such truths as the following were the life of their spirits: *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.—Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.—Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.—We have a great high-priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God*, &c. But, by the turn of thought, and strain of conversation, in many religious connexions of the present day, it would seem as if these things had lost their influence. They are become "dry doctrines," and the parties must have something else. The elevation and depression of their hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, is with them the favourite theme. The consequence is, as might be expected, a living to themselves rather than to him that died and rose again; and a mind either elated by unscriptural enjoyment, or depressed by miserable despondency. It is is not by thinking and talking of the sensations of hunger, but by feeding on the living aliment, that we are filled and strengthened.

Whether the above remarks will satisfy Mr. M'Lean that these are "really my fixed sentiments," and that he has greatly misunderstood the ends for which I wrote the piece on which he animadverted, and of course misrepresented my principles as to their effect on awakened sinners, I cannot tell.* Be this as it may, I trust other readers will be under no temptation to do me injustice.

But, whatever danger may arise from those principles which are too prevalent among us, they are not the only errors, nor does all the danger arise from that quarter. *Subjective* religion is as necessary in its place as *objective*. It is as true that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, as that *without the shedding of blood there is no*

* See his Reply, pp. 46, 47. 152.

remission. It is necessary to look into ourselves for the purpose of conviction, though not for the cause of salvation; and though the evidence of the truth of the gospel is without us, and independent of our state of mind towards it, yet this is not the case with respect to evidence of an interest in its blessings. We have no warrant to expect eternal life but as being the subjects of those things to which it is promised.

I do not perceive, therefore, how it can be justly affirmed, as it lately has been, that "self-examination is not calculated to quiet the conscience, to banish slavish fear, or to remove doubts and apprehensions of our being unbelievers;" and still less how can it be maintained that "peace of mind founded on any thing in ourselves will always puff us up with pride." If the state of our souls be bad, indeed, self-examination must disquiet the conscience, rather than quiet it: but are there no cases in which, through the accusations of others, or a propensity in ourselves to view the dark side of things rather than the bright one, or the afflicting hand of God, our souls may be disquited within us, and in which self-examination may yield us peace? Did the review which Job took of his past life (Chap. xxxi.) yield no peace to him? And though he was not clear when examined by the impartial eye of God, yet were all his solemn appeals respecting his integrity the workings of self-righteous pride? Was David puffed up when he said, *Lord, I have hoped in thy salvation, and have done thy commandments?* Did John encourage a confidence in the flesh, when he said, *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God?* or Peter, when he appealed to Christ, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?*

Had it been only affirmed, that no peace of mind can arise from the recollection of what we have felt or done in times past, while at present we are unconscious of any thing of the kind, this had been true. The past experiences can no otherwise be an evidence of grace to us, than as the remembrance of them rekindles the same sentiments and feelings anew. But to object to all peace of mind arising from a consciousness of having done the will of God, and to denominate it "confidence in the flesh," is repugnant to the whole tenor of scripture.

A system may contain much important truth, and yet be blended with so much error, as to destroy its salutary efficacy. Mr. Sandeman has expunged a great deal of false religion; but whether he has exhibited that of Christ and his apostles, is another question. It is much easier to point out the defects and errors of other systems, than to substitute one that is even less exceptionable; and to talk of "simple truth" and "simple belief," than to exhibit the religion of Jesus in its genuine simplicity.

In discussing the points at issue, we shall meet with some things which may be thought of too metaphysical a cast to be of any great importance: and had not the effects produced convinced me of the contrary, I might have thought so too. But though the principles on which the system rests are many of them so minute as almost to elude detection, yet they are not the less efficacious. The seed is small, but the branch is not so.

It has been regretted, that any person who drinks thoroughly into these views, is at once separated from all his former religious connexions, whatever they might be; and where the heart has been united, it must needs be a matter of regret: yet upon the whole, it may be best. Whatever fruits are produced by this species of religion, whether good or bad, they are hereby much more easily ascertained. Its societies bear some resemblance to so many farms, taken in different parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of scientific experiment; and it must needs be apparent, in the course of fifty or sixty years experience, whether upon the whole, they have turned to a better account than those of their neighbours.

I will only add, in this place, that though I do not conceive of every one as embracing this doctrine, who in some particulars may agree with Mr. Sandeman, (for in that case, I should be reckoned to embrace it myself,) yet many more must be considered as friendly to it in the main, than those who chose to be called either Sandemanian Glassites. It has been held by people of various denominations; by Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists; and has been observed to give distinctive character to the whole of their religion. In this view of the subject I wish to examine it; paying attention, not so much to persons or names as to things, let them be embraced by whom they may. I am yours, &c.

LETTER II.

CONTAINING A GENERAL VIEW OF THE SYSTEM, WITH ITS LEADING POINTS OF DIFFERENCE FROM THE SYSTEMS WHICH IT OPPOSES.

My Dear Friend,

Although the writing of such men as Flavel, Boston, Guthrie, the Erskines, &c. are represented by Mr. Sandeman as furnishing "a devout path to hell," and the writers themselves as pharisees, "than whom no sinners were more hardened, and none greater destroyers of mankind," yet he allows them to have set before us "many articles of the apostolical doctrine;" yea, and to have "asserted *almost all* the articles belonging to the sacred truth." Considering this, and that, so far as these writers held with "good duties, good endeavours, and good motions" in unbelievers preparing them for faith, we give them up, it may seem as if there could be no great difference between Mr. Sandeman and us. Yet a difference there is, and of that importance too, as deeply to affect the doctrine, the worship, the spirit, and the practice of Christianity.

The foundation of whatever is distinguished in the system seems to relate to *the nature of justifying faith*. This Mr. S. constantly represents as *the bare belief of the bare truth;* by which definition he intends, as it would seem, to exclude from it every thing pertaining to the will and the affections, except as effects produced by it.

When Mr. Pike became his disciple, and wished to think that by a "bare belief" he meant a *hearty persuasion*, and not a mere notional belief, Mr. S. rejected his construction, and insisted that

the latter was his true meaning. "Every one," says he, "who obtains a just *notion* of the work and person of Christ, or whose *notion* corresponds to what is testified of him, is justified, and finds peace with God simply by that *notion*."*

This notion he considers as the effect of truth being impressed upon the mind, and denies that the mind is *active in it*. The inactivity of the mind in believing is of so much importance in his account, that the doctrine of justification by grace depends upon it. "He who maintains," says he, "that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms, with Aspasio, that faith is a work exerted by the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he have any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a work exerted by the human mind."†

Mr. Sandeman not only opposes all active endeavours previously to faith, and as tending to produce it, (in which I have no controversy with him,) but sets himself against all exhortations, calls, warnings and expostulations, with the sinner to believe in Christ. "If" says he, "it be inquired what I would say for the relief of one distrest with a sense of guilt, I would tell him to the best of my ability what the gospel says about Christ. If he still doubted, I would set before him all the evidence furnished me by the same gospel. Thus, and thus only, would I press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe. I would urge him with evidence for the truth."‡ And when asked how he would exhort, advise, or address *stupid, unconcerned souls?* He answers, "I am of the mind that a preacher of the gospel, as such, ought to have no influence on men but by means of the gospel which he preaches.—When Paul discoursed concerning *the faith in Christ*, and as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.—It is the duty of every man, in every condition, to obey every divine command. The gospel always supposes this while addressing all men as sinners, it demonstrates their danger, and discovers the remedy. Yet it is absurd to suppose that any man can love the gospel, or obey it, till he believe it. There-

* Epistolary Correspondence, Letter II.

† Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. I. p. 483.

‡ Epistolary Correspodence p. 8.

fore to urge unbelievers to any shadow of that obedience as preparative to justification by faith, can have no other effect than to lead them to establish their own righteousness, and to stand in awe of the preacher."*

If there be any meaning in this answer, it would seem to be that faith itself is not a duty, and that unbelievers ought not to be exhorted to it, lest it should lead them to self-righteousness; but barely to have the evidence of truth stated to them.

Mr. S. represents the sinner as justified, and as having obtained peace to his soul, while utterly destitute of the love of God. "I can never begin to love God," said he, "till I first see him just in justifying me ungodly as I stand."† But being justified in this his ungodly state of mind, he loves God on account of it; and here begins his godliness: "It all consists in love to that which first relieved him."‡

If he had represented the doctrine of Christ as giving relief to the guilty creature, irrespective of any consciousness of a change in himself, or as furnishing him with a ground to conclude that God can be just and the justifier of him *if he believes in Jesus*, this had accorded with Paul's gospel: (Rom. iv. 24.) but for a sinner to perceive himself justified, implies a consciousness that he is a believer, and such a consciousness can never be separate from a conscious love to the divine character. If, indeed, the gospel were an expedient merely to give relief to sinners, and no regard was had in it to the glory of God, a sinner full of enmity to God might receive it, and derive peace from it: but if it be an essential property of it to secure the glory of the divine character, the belief of it must include a sense of that glory, which cannot consist with enmity against it.

Let it also be seriously considered, whether it be true that a sinner is justified "ungodly as he stands?" If it be, he must have been so either *antecedently* to his "seeing" it to be so, and then it must be equally true of all ungodly sinners; or it becomes so when he sees it, and by his seeing it, which is the very absurdity which Mr. S. fastens on the popular preachers.

* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 20. † Ibid. p. 12. ‡ Ibid. p. 8.

Mr. S. and many others have caught at the phrase of the apostle Paul, of "God's justifying the ungodly;" but unless they can prove that by ungodly the apostle meant one that was at the time an enemy of God, it makes nothing in their favour. The amount is, Mr. S.'s relief arises from his "seeing" what is not to be seen; viz. God to be just in justifying him ungodly as he stands; and his relief being founded in falsehood, all his godliness, which confessedly arises from it, must be delusive. *The root is rottenness, and the blossom will go up as the dust.*

From the leading principles of doctrine above stated, it is easy to account for almost all the other peculiarities of the system. Where the root and substance of religion is placed in *knowledge*, exclusive of approbation, it may be expected that the utmost stress will be laid on the former, and that almost every thing pertaining to the latter will be decried under the name of pharisaism, or some other odious appellation. Thus it is that those who have drunk into this system generally value themselves on their clear views; thus they scarcely ever use any other phrase by which to designate the state of a converted man than his *knowing the truth;* and thus all those scripture passages which speak of *knowing the truth* are constantly quoted as being in their favour, though they seldom, if ever, mean knowledge as distinguished from approbation, but as including it.

Farther: I do not perceive how a system whose first principle is "notion," and whose love is confined to "that which first relieves us," can have the love of God in it. It cannot justify God as a lawgiver, by taking blame and shame to ourselves; for it necessarily supposes, and even professes, an abhorrence to both law and justice in every other view than as satisfied by the cross of Christ. The reconciliation to them in this view, therefore, must be merely on the ground of their becoming friendly to our interests. But if God be not justified as a Lawgiver, Christ can never be received as a Saviour. There is no more grace in justification, than there is justice in condemnation: nor is it possible we should see more of the one than of the other; for we cannot see things otherwise than as they are to be seen. But surely a system which neither justifies the Lawgiver, nor receives the Saviour *as hon-*

ouring him, cannot be of God. The love of God *as God* is not in it. Conversion, on this principle, is not *turning to the Lord*. It professes indeed, to love God, but it is only for our own sake. The whole process requires no renovation of the spirit of the mind; for the most depraved creature is capable of loving himself, and that which relieves him.

Is it any wonder that a religion founded on such a principle should be litigious, conceited, and censorious towards all who do not embrace it? It is of the nature of a selfish spirit to be so. If God himself be loved only for the relief he affords us, it cannot be surprising that men should; nor that, under the cover of loving them only for the truth's sake, all manner of bitterness and contempt should be cherished against every one who dares to dispute our dogmas.

Farther: The love of God being in a manner excluded from the system, it may be expected that the defect will be supplied by a punctilious attention to certain forms; of which some will be found to arise from a misunderstanding of the scriptures, and others which may not, yet being regarded to the neglect of weightier matters, resemble *the tithing of mint, anise and cummin.*

Such, from the repeated views that I have been able to take of the system, appear to me to me to be its grand outlines; and I am not surprised to find that, in the course of half a century, it has landed so large a part of its votaries on the shores of Infidelity, or sunk them in the abyss of worldly conformity. Those who live near them say there is scarcely any appearance of serious religion in their families, unless we might call by that name the scrupulosity that would refuse to pray with an unbeliever, but would have no objection to accompany him to the theatre. Mr. S. and his admirers have reproached many for their *devotion:* but I cannot learn that they were ever reproached with this evil in return.

The grand argument of Mr. S. against faith being an act of the mind, and against admitting of any active advance of the soul towards Christ as necessary to justification, is, that it is rendering faith a *work;* and that to be justified by faith would, after all, be to be justified by a work of our own. This is the principal idea pertaining to what he calls "the very rankest poison of the popu-

lar doctrines."* If this argument can be overturned, the greater part of his system falls with it. That it may appear in all its force I will quote his strongest representations of it.

"Perhaps it will be thought needful that I should define with greater precision than I have hitherto done, what I mean by the *popular doctrine*, especially as I have considered many as preachers thereof who differ remarkably from each other; and particularly as I have ranked among them Mr. Wesley, who may justly be reckoned one of the most virulent reproachers of that God whose character is drawn by the apostles, that this island has produced. To remove all doubt concerning my meaning, I shall thus explain myself. Throughout these letters, I consider all those as teachers of the popular doctrine who seek to have credit and influence among the people, by resting our acceptance with God, not simply on what Christ has done, but more or less on *the use we make of him*, the advance we make towards him, or some secret desire, wish or sigh to do so; or on something we feel or do concerning him, by the assistance of some kind of grace or spirit: or lastly, on something we employ him to do, and suppose he is yet to do for us. In sum, all who would have us to be conscious of something else than the bare truth of the gospel; all who would have us to be conscious of some beginning of a change to the better, or some desire, however faint, toward such change, in order to our acceptance with God; these I call the popular preachers, however much they may differ from each other about faith, grace, special or common, or about any thing else.—My resentment is all along chiefly pointed against the capital branch of the popular doctrine, which, while it asserts *almost all the articles belonging to the sacred truth*, at the same time deceitfully clogs them with the opposite falsehoods."

Again: "That the saving truth is effectually undermined by this confusion, may readily be seen in the following easy view."—(This is what I call his grand argument.)—"HE WHO MAINTAINS THAT WE ARE JUSTIFIED ONLY BY FAITH, AND AT THE SAME TIME AFFIRMS, WITH ASPASIO, THAT FAITH IS A WORK EXERTED BY THE

*Letters on Theron and Aspasio, p. 448.

HUMAN MIND, UNDOUBTEDLY MAINTAINS, IF HE HAS ANY MEANING TO HIS WORDS, THAT WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY A WORK EXERTED BY THE HUMAN MIND.

"I have all along studied to make use of every form of expression I could think of, for evincing in the most clear, palpable, and striking manner, a difference of the last importance, which thousands of preachers have laboured to cover with a mist. If I have made that difference manifest to those who have any attention for the subject, my great end in writing is gained, on whatever side of it men shall chuse to range themselves. It has frequently appeared to me a thing no less amazing than provoking, when the great difference between the ancient gospel here contended for and the popular doctrine has been pointed out as clear as words could make it, to find many, after all, so obstinately stupid, as to declare they saw no real difference. This I cannot account for by assigning any other cause than the special agency of the prince of darkness."*

After this, it may be thought an act of temerity to complain of not understanding Mr. Sandeman; and indeed I shall make no such complaint, for I think I do clearly understand his meaning; but whether he has fairly represented that of his opponents, I shall take the liberty to inquire.

The popular preachers "rest our acceptance with God," it seems, "not simply on what Christ hath done, but on the active advance of the soul towards him." Do they then consider faith, whether we be active or passive in it, as forming a part of our justifying righteousness? In other words, do they consider it as any part of *that for the sake of which* a sinner is accepted? They every where declare the contrary. I question if there be one of those whom Mr. S. *ordinarily* denominates popular preachers, who would not cordially subscribe to the passage in Aspasio, which he so highly applauds, and considers as inconsistent with the popular doctrine; viz, "Both grace and faith stand in direct opposition to works; *all* works whatever, whether they be works of the law, or works of the gospel; exercises of the heart, or actions

* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. II, pp. 480. 483.

of the life ; done while we remain unregenerate, or when we become regenerate; they are all and every of them *equally* set aside in this great affair."* If the popular preachers maintain an active advance of the soul to be necessary to our acceptance with God, it is in no other sense than that in which he himself maintains "the bare belief of the truth" to be so ; that is, not as a procuring cause, but as *that without which, according to the established order of things*, there is no acceptance. To accuse them therefore of corrupting the doctrine of justification on this account, must be owing either to gross ignorance or disingenuousness.

Yet in this strain, the eulogists of Mr. Sandeman go on to declaim to this day. "His main doctrine," says one appears to be this: The bare work of Jesus Christ, which he finished on the cross, is sufficient, without a deed or a thought on the part of man, to present the chief of sinners spotless before God.† If by *sufficient* be meant that it is that *only on account of which*, or *for the sake of which* a sinner is justified, it is very true ; and Mr. Sandeman's opponents believed it no less than he himself: but if he meant to deny that any deed or thought on the part of man is necessary *in the established order of things*, or that sinners *are* presented spotless before God without a deed or a thought on the subject, it is very false, and goes to deny the necessity of faith to salvation; for surely no man can be said to believe in Christ without thinking of him.

Mr. Pike, who had embraced Mr. Sandeman's views of faith, yet says to him, "I cannot but conceive that you are sometimes mistaken in your representations of what you call the popular doctrine ; for instance, *Upon the popular plan*, say you, *we can never have peace in our consciences until we be sensible of some beginning of a good disposition in us towards Christ*. Now, setting aside some few unguarded expressions and addresses, you will find that the general drift and purport of their doctrine is just the contrary to this ; and they labour this point, both Marshal and Hervey, to convince persons that *nothing* of this nature does or can recommend them to God, or be any part of their justifying righteous-

* Theron and Aspasio, Vol. 1. p. 276. † Cooper's Letters, p. 33.

ness: and their principal view is to beget, or draw forth such thoughts in the mind as lead the soul entirely out of itself to Christ alone for righteousness."* It is observable too, that though Mr. S. answered this letter of Mr. Pike, yet he takes no notice of this passage.

I am not vindicating either Marshall or Hervey, in all their views: but justice requires that this misrepresentation should be corrected; especially as it runs through the whole of Mr. Sandeman's writings, and forms the basis of an enormous mass of invective.

By *works* opposed to grace and faith, the New Testament means *works done with a view of obtaining life; or of procuring acceptance with God as the reward of them.* If repentance, faith, or sincere obedience be recommended as being such a condition of salvation, as that God may be expected to bestow it in reward of them, this is turning the gospel into a covenant of works, and is as much opposed to grace, and to the true idea of justification by faith, as any works of the law can be. But to deny the activity of the soul in believing, lest faith itself should become a work of the law, and so after all we should be justified by a work, is both antiscriptural and nugatory: *antiscriptural,* because the whole tenor of the Bible exhorts sinners to forsake their ways and return to the Lord, *that he may have mercy upon them:* to believe in the light, *that they may be children of light;* and to come to him, *that they may have life:—nugatory,* because we need not go far for proof that men know how to value themselves and despise others, on *account* of their *notions,* as well as of their actions; and so are capable of making a righteousness of he one, as well as of the other.

Farther: If there be any weight in Mr. Sandeman's argument, it falls equally on his own hypothesis as on that of his opponents. Thus we might argue, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms, with Mr. Sandeman, that faith is a notion formed by the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he have any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a notion formed by the human mind.

* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 24,

Mr. S. as if aware of his exposedness to this retort, labours, in the foregoing quotation, to make *nothing* of the belief of the truth, or to keep every idea but that of the truth believed out of sight. So fearful is he of making faith to be any thing which has a real subsistence in the mind, that he plunges into gross absurdity to avoid it. Speaking of that of which the believer is "conscious," he makes it to be *truth*, instead of the *belief* of it; as if any thing could be an object of consciousness but what passes or exists in the mind!

It may be thought, that the phrase, "All who would have us to be *conscious* of something else than the bare *truth* of the gospel," is a mere slip of the pen; but it is not; for had Mr. S. spoken of belief, instead of the truth believed, as an object of consciousness, his statement would have been manifestly liable to the consequence which he charges on his opponents. It might then have been said to him, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms that faith is *something inherent in the human mind*, undoubtedly maintains, if he have any meaning to his words, that we are justified by something inherent in the human mind.

You must by this time perceive, that Mr. Sandeman's grand argument, or, as he denominates it, his "easy view," turns out to be a mere sophism. To detect it, you have only to consider *the same thing in different views;* which is what Mr. Sandeman himself does on some occasions, as do all other men. "I agree with you," says he to Mr. Pike, "in maintaining that faith is the principle and spring of every good disposition, or of every good work: but, at the same time, I maintain that faith does not justify the ungodly *as* a principle of good dispositions."* Why then may we not maintain that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirm that faith is a grace *inherent*, an *act* of the human mind, a *duty* commanded of God; and all this without affirming that we are justified by any thing inherent, any act of ours, or any duty that we perform? And why must we be supposed to use words without meaning, or to contradict ourselves, when we only maintain that we are justifi-

* Epistolary Correspodence, p. 10.

ed by that which *is* inherent, *is* an act of the human mind, and *is* a duty; while yet it is not *as such*, but as uniting us to Christ, and deriving righteousness from him that it justifies?*

Assuredly, there is no necessity for reducing faith to a nullity, in order to maintain the doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ. While we hold that faith justifies, *not in respect of the act of believing, but of the righteousness on which it terminates*, or that God's pardoning and receiving us to favour is in reward, not of our believing, but of his Son's obedience unto death, every purpose is answered, and all inherent righteousness is excluded.

I have been the more particular on this "easy view" of Mr. Sandeman, because it is manifestly the grand pillar of his doctrine. If this be overturned, there is nothing left standing but what will fall with a few slight touches; and whether it be so, I now leave you and the reader to judge.

To establish the doctrine of free justification, Mr. S. conceives it to be necessary to reduce justifying faith to a bare "belief," exclusive of every "advance" of the mind towards Christ, or of *coming* to him, *trusting* in him, &c. and to maintaining that these terms denote the *effects* of faith in those who are already in a justified state.†

In opposing Mr. S. many have denied that the belief of the gospel is justifying faith. Observing, on the one hand, that numbers appear to believe the truth, on whom, nevertheless, it has no salutary influence; and, on the other, that believing in Christ in the New Testament is synonymous with "receiving him," "trusting in him," and "coming to him," they have concluded that the belief of the gospel is rather to be considered as something *presupposed* in faith, than faith itself. But there can be no doubt that the belief of the gospel has, in a great number of instances, the promise of salvation; and as to those nominal Christians on whom it has no salutary influence, they believe Christ no more than the Jews believed Moses, which our Lord would not allow that they did

* See President Edwards' Sermons on Justification, pp. 14, 26

† Epistolary Correspondence, p. 34.

If ye believed Moses, says he, *ye would believe me, for he wrote of me.*

But the belief of the gospel is allowed to have the promise of salvation, and so to be justifying, yet it does not follow that it is so *exclusive* of receiving Christ, trusting in him, or coming to him. It were easy to prove that repentance has the promise of forgiveness, and that by as great a variety of passages as are brought to prove that the belief of the gospel is saving faith: but were this attempted, we should be told, and justly too, that we are not to consider repentance in these passages, as excluding, but including faith in the Saviour. Such, then, is the answer to the argument drawn from the promises of salvation made to the belief of the gospel: belief, in these connexions, is not to be understood exclusive of receiving the Saviour, coming to him, or trusting in him; but as supposing and including them.

It is not denied, that the ideas conveyed by these terms are metaphysically distinct from that of believing the gospel, nor that they are its immediate effects; but it is not in this metaphysical sense that faith is used in reference to justification. That belief which the gospel justifies, includes receiving Christ, coming to him, and trusting in him. Whatever shades of difference there be between belief and these "advances of the mind towards Christ," the scriptures represent them, *with respect to an interest in justification and other collateral blessings*, as one and the same thing. This is manifest from the following passages: *As many as* RECEIVED *him, to them gave he power (or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that* BELIEVE *on his name.—I know whom I have* BELIEVED, *and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have* COMMITTED TO HIM *against that day.—That we should be to the praise and glory of his grace, who* FIRST TRUSTED *in Christ. In whom ye also* TRUSTED *after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after ye* BELIEVED, *ye were sealed*, &c.—*He that* COMETH *to me shall never hunger, and he that* BELIEVETH *in me shall never thirst.—Ye will not* COME *unto me, that ye may have life.—* COME *unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

In these, and many other passages, it is manifest, that believing, coming, trusting, &c. are used as convertible terms, and that the thing signified by them is necessary to justification. If "receiving" Christ were an effect of faith in persons already justified, why is it used as synonymous with it, and held up as necessary to our being *the sons of God?* If "coming" to Christ were an exercise of mind in one who was already in a state of justification, why is he said to come to him *that he may have life?* And why, if salvation be promised to a mere "notion" of the truth, without any love to it, is it said of apostates that "they received not the *love of the truth, that they might be saved*"? Let those who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, judge from these things, whether a mere notion of the truth, exclusive, or, if you please, antecedent to the consideration of receiving Christ, coming to him, and trusting in him, be the faith that justifies; and whether, if the former were separate from the latter, it would not leave the sinner under condemnation.

It has been said "In defining saving faith, some have included in its essence almost every holy temper; and by insisting so much on this faith, and giving such laboured descriptions of it, have almost inevitably led their followers to look more to their faith than to the great object of faith, to be more occupied in attending to the working of their own minds than with that truth which reconciles the sinner to God. It is in consequence to be feared that not a few who are reckoned orthodox, are in fact trusting to their faith, and not to Christ, making him merely a minister of their own self-righteousness: for we may go about to establish our own righteousness under the name of faith, as well as under any other name."

I doubt not but preachers may abound in describing one part of divine truth, to the neglect of another, and may go even beyond the truth; people also may make a righteousness of their faith, as well as of other things. If no more were meant than that a sinner whose enquiry is, What must I do to be saved? ought to be directed immediately to Christ, and not to an examination into the nature of faith, I should most cordially acquiesce in it: but it does not follow that nothing should, on any occasion, be said of the true nature of faith. There may be a time when the same person shall

come with another, and very different question; namely, Am I a true believer? Such questions there must have been in the Apostle's time, or there would not have been answers to them. (See 1 John ii. 3. iii. 14. 18—21.) Now, in answer to such an enquiry, the true nature and genuine effects of faith require to be stated, and distinguished from that which leaves thousands short of salvation. And as to men making a righteousness of their faith, men may make a righteousness of simple belief, as well as of trust, or any other idea supposed to be included in justifying faith: and whether there be not actually as much laboured description, self-admiration, and contempt of others, (things nearly akin to self-righteousness,) among the advocates of this system, as among their opponents, let the candid observer judge. If we are to say nothing about the holy nature of faith, lest men should make a righteousness of it, we must say nothing of any thing else that is holy, for the same reason, and so cease to distinguish all true religion in the mind, from that which is counterfeit: but so did not the sacred writers.

To the same purpose Mr, M'Lean writes in his treastise on the *Commission:* "Now when men include in the very nature of justifying faith such good dispositions, holy affections, and pious exercises of heart, as the moral law requires, and so make them necessary (no matter under what consideration) to acceptation with God, it perverts the Apostle's doctrine upon this important subject, and makes justification to be at least *as it were* by the works of the law."

I know not of any writer who has given such a definition of faith as these statements would represent. No more holy affection is pleaded for in faith, than unholy disaffection is allowed to be in unbelief. But the design is manifestly to exclude *all* holy affection from faith as being favourable to self-righteousness.

If, therefore, *repentance* be considered as necessary to forgiveness, seeing this must be allowed to include holy affection, it will be considered as favourable to self-righteousness. And as to distinguishing between what is necessary *in the established order of things*, from what is necessary as a *procuring cause*, this will not be admitted; for it is "no matter under what consideration:" if

any thing required by the moral law be rendered necessary, it makes justification to be at least "*as it were* by the works of the law." Yet Mr. M. allows faith, whatever it is, to be a *duty*. Is it then a requirement of a *new and remedial law*? Would not the love of God, which is required by the old law, lead any sinner to believe in Christ? If not, why is unbelief alleged against the Jews as a proof that they had not the love of God in them? (See John v. 42, 43.) As Mr. M. however, in his piece on *the Calls and Invitations of the Gospel*, has gone far towards answering himself, I shall transcribe a passage from that performance: "It is an unscriptural refinement upon divine grace," he there says, "and contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, to class faith and repentance with the works of the law, and to state them as equally opposite to free justification. Indeed, neither faith nor repentance are the meritorious, or procuring cause of a sinner's justification, any more than the works of the law are. (And who that really believes and repents will imagine that they are?) But still the one is opposed to free justification, the other not. To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; and faith and repentance corresponding exactly with the manifestation of divine grace, as freely justifying the guilty through the atonement, are in their very nature opposite to all self-dependence, and lead men to glory only in the Lord." (p. 26.)

We see here that there is nothing in the nature of *repentance* that clashes with a free justification, which yet must be allowed to include a portion of holy affection. Why then object to the same thing in faith? Is it because holy affection is "required by the moral law"? Be it so, it is the same in repentance as in faith; and if the one may in its very nature agree with a free justification, so may the other. The truth is, the moral law *materially* considered, is not opposed to free justification. The love of God and man in its own nature is as opposite to self-righteous pride as faith and repentance are. It is not the law that is against the promises, but those *works of the law done by a sinful creature with a view of obtaining life, or of procuring acceptance with God as the reward of them.* If holy affection were urged with such a view, then were it opposed to the free grace of the gospel; but while

this is not the case, all such reasonings are unscriptural refinements.

If men make a righteousness of their faith, it is not owing to these representations of it, but to their own corruptions; for let faith include what good disposition it may, it is no part of the meritorious cause of justification; and let it be simplified as it may, even till it shall contain no more of the holy nature of God than a glance of the eye, yet it is not on this account more friendly to the doctrine of grace, nor less liable to become the food of a self-righteous spirit. The way in which this spirit is cut up in the New Testament is, not by reducing faith to an unfeeling speculation, but by denouncing the curse against every one who cometh short of perfect obedience. Gal. iii. 10.

It has been further said, "Faith purifies the heart, worketh by love, and discovereth itself sincere by the performance of good works. Faith, therefore, is not holiness, love, or new obedience, unless the effect is the same with the cause, or the evidence with the thing proved. Faith certainly is not the same thing as holiness, or love, or new obedience. Neither is unbelief the same thing as unholiness, enmity or disobedience: but it is not so distinct from either, as not to partake of the same *general nature*. It is not only the root of all other sin, but is itself a sin. In like manner, faith is not only the root of all other obedience, but is itself an exercise of obedience. It is called "obeying the truth," and "obeying the gospel." To say that faith includes no holiness, (which this objection certainly does,) and yet produces it, as the seed produces the plant, is to contradict the established laws of nature, according to which, every seed produces *its own body*. God can produce something out of nothing, but in the ordinary course of traduction every seed produces *after its kind*. If holiness, therefore, were not included in faith, it would not grow out of it.

Mr. M'Lean does not agree with Mr. Sandeman in considering faith as a *passive* admission of the truth, but allows it to be an *act* or *exercise* of the mind.* A large part of his work, however, is

* Reply, pp. 74, 75.

taken up in attempting to prove that it is a mere exercise of the understanding, exclusive of every thing pertaining to the will and affections. It is no part of the question between him and me, whether, properly speaking, it has *its seat* in the understanding; for this it may have, and yet be influenced by the disposition. Unbelief has its seat in the understanding as much as belief, yet it is not denied that this is influenced by the disposition. "It arises," says Mr. M'Lean, "not merely from ignorance, but also from the *aversion* of the will, whereby the judgment is blinded, and most unreasonably prejudiced against the truth."* Nor had Mr. M'Lean any just ground for construing what I had said in proof of faith in Christ being *such* a belief as arises from a renewal of the spirit of the mind, as an attempt to "prove that faith is *more than belief*. (p. 80.) He *allows unbelief to arise*, in part from disposition; yet I suppose he would not be thought, by this concession, to make it something more than unbelief. If unbelief may consist in such a discredit of the gospel as arises from aversion to it, and yet be nothing more than unbelief; faith may consist in such a credit of the gospel as arises from a renewal of the spirit of the mind, and yet be nothing more than belief.

To this may be added, if faith in Christ be a duty commanded of God, an act of the human mind, an exercise of obedience to God, (all of which Mr. M. acknowledges,) it *must* be the effect of regeneration, or it will follow, that *they that are in the flesh may please God.*

Mr. M'Lean speaks much of *simple* belief, as Mr. Sandeman did of *bare* belief. Mr. S. manifestly intended hereby to exclude every "advance" of the sinner to Christ, as signified by such terms as *coming* to Christ, *trusting* in him, &c. from justifying faith. Such may be the intention of Mr. M'Lean: if it be not, I do not understand the use of the epithet. He cannot, however, consistently reject every "advance of the mind to Christ as belonging to justifying faith, since he acknowledges the soul to be active in believing. But, while dwelling so much on *simple belief*, why does he not dwell also on *simple unbelief?* If belief be simple so must

* Reply, p. 76.

unbelief, for they are opposites. And I readily acknowledge there are such things as simple belief and simple unbelief; but neither of them apply to the credit or discredit of the gospel. If a stranger who has no claim on my confidence, relate a story of something that he has seen in a distant country, but which in no way concerns me, I may believe him, or disbelieve him; my faith in the one case, or my unbelief in the other, would be perfectly simple. But if it be a story of deep interest, if the undoubted veracity of the party have a claim on my confidence, and if my future course of life turns upon the credit or discredit that I give him, neither the one nor the other will be *simple*, but compounded of a number of moral principles which influence my decision: if to discredit his testimony, they are prejudices which blind me to the force of evidence: if to credit it, candour or openness to conviction. It is thus in believing the gospel, which is a subject of the deepest interest, testified by a Being whose veracity it is a crime to question, and of such consequence to a sinner, even in this life, that if he admit it, he must relinquish all his former courses and live a new life. Intrenched in prejudice, self-righteousness, and the love of sin, he continues an unbeliever till these strong holds are beaten down; nor will he believe so long as a wreck of them remains sufficient to shelter him against the arrows of conviction; nor, in short, till by the renovating influence of the Holy Spirit they fall to the ground. It is then, and not till then, that the doctrine of salvation by mere grace, through a mediator, is cordially believed.

Mr. M'Lean, in his arguing for what he calls simple belief, seems to be aware that it is not the proper opposite of unbelief as described in the scriptures. Hence he somewhere alleges that we cannot reason from the nature of unbelief to that of belief, any more than from that of demerit to merit. But the disparity between demerit and merit, to which he refers, does not respect their nature, but the condition of the party who is the subject of them. Merit is the desert of good, and demerit the desert of evil: they are, therefore, properly opposites, whatever may be the condition of the party as to being equally capable of exercising them; and it

is fair *in ascertaining their nature* to argue from the one to the other.

Upon the whole, I see no reason to retract what I have in substance said before, that if faith and unbelief be opposites, (which to deny, were disowning that which is self-evident,) the one can be no more simple, or exclusive of the influence of the will, than the other.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER III.

CONTAINING A MORE PARTICULAR INQUIRY INTO THE CONSEQUENCES OF MR. SANDEMAN'S NOTION OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

My Dear Friend,

You will not conclude, from any thing I have said, or may yet say, that I accuse every one who favours this doctrine of holding all the consequences which may be proved to arise from it: it is however, a fair method of trying a principle by pointing out other principles to which it leads, which, if contrary to the scriptures, furnish reasons for rejecting it.

If the faith by which we are justified be a mere passive reception of light, or contain no exercise of affection, it follows:

First, *That repentance is not necessary to forgiveness.* It is allowed, on all hands, that justification includes the forgiveness of sin. Whatever differences there be between them, they are not so different but that he who is justified is forgiven. If therefore we be justified by a mere notion of the truth antecedently to all exercise of affection, we are forgiven in the same way; that is our sins are forgiven before we repent of them.

Mr. Sandeman, I conceive, would have avowed this consequence. Indeed he does avow it, in effect, in declaring that "he can never begin to love God till he first see him just in justifying him, ungodly as he stands. If he cannot begin to love God he cannot begin to be sorry for having sinned against him, unless it be for the consequences which it has brought upon himself. By being justified "ungodly as he stands," he means to say, therefore, that he is justified and forgiven, while his mind is in a state of impenitence, and that it is the consideration of this that renders him penitent.

Whether this notion be not in direct opposition to the whole current of both the Old and New Testament, let the following passages, out of many more which might be selected, determine. *I said I will* CONFESS *my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou* FORGAVEST *the iniquity of my sin.—If thy people Israel sin aginst thee, and* REPENT, *and make supplication unto thee towards this house, then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place and forgive thy people.—He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy. Let the wicked* FORSAKE HIS WAY, *and the unrighteous man his* THOUGHTS, *and let him* RETURN UNTO THE LORD, *and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will* ABUNDANTLY PARDON. *Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.—*REPENT *therefore and be baptised, every one of you, for the remission of sins.—*REPENT YE THEREFORE, AND BE CONVERTED, THAT YOUR SINS MAY BE BLOTTED OUT.—*Him hath God exalted a prince, and a Saviour, to give* REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.—*If we* CONFESS OUR SINS, *he is faithful and just to* FORGIVE US OUR SINS, AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

I shall not stop here to inquire into the order in which the scriptures represent repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. This I shall attend to in a letter by itself. It is sufficient at present to observe, that whatever be the order of repentance in respect of faith, it is uniformly represented in the scriptures as necessary to forgiveness. Every notion, therefore, of standing forgiven in a state of impenitence, and of this being the only motive that can lead a sinner to repentance, is false and delusive.

Secondly: *On this principle, faith in Christ is not a duty, and unbelief is not a sin.* I am not sure whether Mr. Sandeman would have avowed both, or either of these consequences. He, however, utterly disavows urging unbelievers to the least shadow of obedience to the gospel in order to justification, as leading them to establish their own righteousness.* The faith, therefore, which

* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 29.

he allows to be necessary to justification, includes no obedience, which is the same thing as its being no duty. And if it be not a duty, unbelief is not a sin ; for where there is no obligation, there can be no transgression.

But a system which goes to nullify the command of God to believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and to excuse the sin which is threatened with eternal damnation, must be fundamentally erroneous, as far as it operates, subversive of true religion.

Mr. M'Lean is very far from admitting this consequence, though he retains, in part, the principle from which it proceeds. He allows, as we have seen already, that faith is a *duty*, an *act of obedience* to God, and a *holy exercise* of mind ; yet he pleads for its containg nothing pertaining to the will. Is it possible then for any thing to be either an act, or a duty, or to contain obedience, which is purely intellectual ? In whatever belongs to the understanding only, exclusive of the will and affections, the soul, I conceive, is passive. There are acts, no doubt, which pertain to the intellectual, as well as to the visive faculty : but they are only such as fall under the influence of the will. It is an act to look, but not to see ; and to collect information, but not to be informed. If therefore, believing be an act of the mind, it must fall under the influence of the will.

Mr. Sandeman is consistent with himself; however inconsistent he may be with the scriptures. In confining faith to the understanding, he was aware that he disowned its being an act, and therefore, in his usual strain of banter, selected some of the grossest representations of his opponents, and endeavoured to hold up acts of faith to ridicule. But Mr. M'Lean allows of faith being an act, and an act of obedience, and yet will have it that it contains nothing pertaining to the will, except in its effects. I can no otherwise account for such reasoning, in a writer of his talents, than by ascribing it to the influence of early prejudices, contracted by having drunk too deeply into the system of Mr. S. and retained by a partiality for what he had once imbibed, though utterly inconsistent with other sentiments which he has since learned from the scriptures. That nothing can contain obedience but that which includes the state or exercises of the will, or has some dependence

upon it, is manifest from universal experience. Tell a man that God has commanded him to be or to do that in which he is absolutely involuntary, and that the contrary is a sin; and see whether you can fasten conviction on his conscience. Nay, make the experiment on yourself. Did you ever perceive yourself obliged to any thing in which your will had no concern, or for a moment repent of living in the neglect of it? Knowledge may be a duty, and ignorance a sin, so far as each is dependant on the will, and comprehensive of approbation, but no further. *Love is the fulfilling of the law*, or that which comprehends the whole of duty. So much, therefore, as there is of love in any exercise of mind, so much, there is of duty or obedience, and no more. Duty supposes knowledge, indeed, as Christianity supposes humanity; but the essence of it consists in disposition. It may be our duty to examine and that with care, dilligence, and impartiality; but if disposition have no place in faith, it cannot be our duty to believe.

If faith be merely light in the understanding, unbelief must be merely the absence of it: and if the former include nothing pertaining to the will, neither does the latter. To say, that though unbelief contain a voluntary rejection of the truth, yet faith contains no voluntary reception of it, is saying that belief and unbelief are not opposites, which is equal to denying a self-evident proposition. If the one be purely intellectual, so is the other; and if there be no obedience in the first, there is no disobedience in the last.

Mr. M'Lean has said every thing on this subject that I could desire, except drawing the conclusion. Thus he reasons, when proving faith to be a duty: "Unbelief, which is the opposite of faith, is always represented as a very great and heinous sin against God. The unbelieving heart is termed an evil heart; (Heb. iii. 12.) and that there are many evils in the heart of man which both occasion and attend unbelief. It is frequently ascribed to ignorance; (Matt. xiii. 19. Rom. x. 3. xi. 7. 25.) yet not to simple ignorance, from want of information or neutral capacity in which case it would be excusable; (John ix. 41. xv. 22. 24.) but such as arises from the agency of the god of this world, blinding the minds of them that believe not, (2 Cor. iv. 4.) It is wilful igno-

tance, occasioned by their loving darkness and hating the light; (John iii. 19, 20.) and so they are represented as having closed their eyes lest they should see. Matt. xiii. 15. From this it appears, that unbelief is founded, not merely on simple ignorance, but aversion from the things of God.

"Now, if unbelief be a sin, and seated in the depravity of the heart, as has been shown, it necessarily follows that faith, its opposite, must be a duty," [and have its seat also in the heart.] *Sermons*, pp. 40, 41. The words added in crotchets merely go to draw the conclusion; and whether it be fairly drawn, let the reader judge.

Mr. M. cannot consistently object, that by allowing unbelief to be seated in the heart, he did not mean to grant that it was seated in the will, since his whole argument asserts the contrary; and he elsewhere says, "The Scriptures always represent the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the spirit as exerted upon the heart; which includes not only the understanding, but the will and affections, or theprevalent inclinations and dispositions of the soul." Works, Vol. II. p. 91.

I had said, (in my Appendix,) 'I can scarcely conceive of a truth more self-evident than this, that God's commands extend only to that which comes under the influence of the will.' Mr. M. allows this to be "a principle on which my main arguments seem to be grounded." It became him, therefore, if he were able, to give it a solid answer. And what is his answer? It is so far, he says, from being self-evident, that to him it does not appear evident at all. He should instance, then in something which *is allowed* not to come under the influence of the will, but which, nevertheless is a duty. Instead of this, he says, the commands of God "extend not only to what comes under the influence of the will, but also *to the belief of the revealed truths and motives by which the will itself is influenced.*"* But who does not perceive that this is proving a thing by itself; or alleging as evidence that which is the very point in dispute?

The argument was this: All duty comes under the influence of the will—but faith is a duty—therefore faith comes under the

* Reply, p. 70.

influence of the will. To have overturned the first of these propositions, which is that which calls in question, he should have shown by something else than belief, something that is *allowed* not to come under the influence of the will, that it may, nevertheless, be commanded of God. But this he has not shown, nor attempted to show.

All that Mr. M'Lean has done towards answering this argument is by labouring to fasten certain absurdities upon it. "If believing God with the understanding," he says, "be not a duty, it must be either because he has not given a clear revelation of the truth, and supported it with sufficient evidence, or if he has, that there is no moral turpitude in mental error."*

By this way of writing, it would seem as if I pleaded for men's believing without their understanding, of which I certainly have no idea, any more than of their disbelieving without it. I hold no more in respect of faith, than Mr. M. does in respect of unbelief; namely, that it does not pertain to the understanding only. The greatest evidence of authority cannot oblige us to that in which we are obsolutely involuntary. God commands us to love him with all our powers, but not beyond our powers. To love him with all our hearts includes every thing that depends upon disposition, even the bowing of our understandings to revealed truth, instead of proudly rejecting it; but that is all. So far as knowledge or belief is absolutely involuntary, we might as well ascribe duty to the convulsive motions of the body as to them. And as to "mental error," if it could be proved to be merely mental; that is, not to arise from indolence, prejudice, aversion, or any other evil disposition, it would be innocent. Christ did not criminate the Jews for simply misunderstanding him, but refers to the cause of that misunderstanding as the ground of censure. WHY *do ye not understand my speech? because* YE CANNOT HEAR MY WORD:" that is, because they were utterly averse to it. Mr. M'Lean acknowledges as much as this, when he speaks of the neglect of the great salvation being the effect of "*perverseness and aversion*, and therefore inexcusable." What is this but admitting that if it arose from simple ignorance it would be excusable?

* Reply, p. 76.

Another consequence which Mr. M. endeavours to fasten upon this principle is, "If faith be not a duty unless it be influenced by the moral state of the heart, then it can be no man's duty to believe the testimony of God concerning his son *till he is previously possessed of that mortal state.*"* But if this consequence were just, it would follow from his own principles as well as mine. He considers the illumination of the Holy Spirit, as necessary to believing; but does he infer that till such illumination take place, it is not a sinner's duty to believe? He also considers repentance as the fruit of faith; but does he infer that till a sinner is in possession of faith, it is not his duty to repent? The truth is, that God, in requiring any one duty, (be it repentance or faith, or what it may,) requires that, *as to the state of mind*, which is necessary to it. It was not the duty of Absalom to ask pardon of David without feeling sorry for his offence: but it does not follow that while his heart was hardened he was under no obligation to ask pardon. He was under obligation to both; and so are men with regard to believing the gospel. They are obliged to be of an open, upright, unprejudiced mind, and so to believe the truth.

If faith be a duty, believing is a holy exercise of the mind; for what else is holiness but a conformity of mind to the revealed will of God? Mr. M. allows of a belief which is "merely natural," and that it has "no holiness in it." He also allows that which has the promise of salvation is holy. So far then he seems to be agreed. Yet when he comes to state wherein its holiness consists, he seems to resolve every thing into the cause, and the *nature of the truth believed.*† Each of these, indeed, afford proof of the holy nature of faith: but to say that it consists in either, is to place the nature of a thing in its cause, and in the object on which it terminates. The objects of belief are exactly the same as those of unbelief; but it will not be alleged, I presume, that unbelief is a holy exercise!

The sum is, Mr. M. thinks he ascribes duty and holiness to faith; but his hypothesis is inconsistent with both. And this is all that I ever meant to charge him with. It never was in my

* Reply, p. 73. † Ibid. p. 67

heart to "impeach his honesty,*" though he has more than once impeached mine.

Thirdly: *On this principle, calls, invitations, and exhortations to believe have no place in the Christian ministry.* To call, invite, or exhort a man to that in which his will has no concern, is self-evident absurdity. Every man must feel it, if he only makes the experiment. Mr. Sandeman is aware of this, and therefore utterly gives up the practice, declaring that the whole of what he has to offer is *evidence.* He says, "I would set before him (the sinner) all the evidence furnished me by the gospel. Thus, and thus only, would I press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe."† That is, he would not press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe at all. So far he is consistent with himself, though at the utmost variance with the scriptures.

God, however, by the prophets and apostles, did not barely offer evidence, but addressed every power and passion of the human mind. Mr. Sandeman may call this "human clamour, pressing men on to the blind business of performing some task called believing;" but this will prove nothing but his dexterity, when pressed with an argument which he cannot answer, at turning it off by raillery. The clamour of the prophets and apostles was such as follows: *Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.—Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*

If this figurative language should be thought to leave the subject in doubt, the following verses express the same sentiments without a figure: *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord,*

* Reply, p. 64. † Epistolary Correspondence, p. 8.

and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.—Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.—Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Repent ye, and believe the gospel.—Ho, every one that thirsteth, let him come unto me and drink!—While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.—Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life. Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.—Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.—Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.—Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.—All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech (men) *by us, we pray,* (them) *in Christ's stead,* (saying) *be ye reconciled to God.*

Mr. Sandeman may tell us that the character of ambassadors does not belong to ordinary ministers, and may attribute the invitations used in the present day to "priestly pride, and strutting self-importance;" but this will only prove that he has reasoned himself into a situation from which he has no other way of extricating himself than by having recourse to abuse instead of argument. What does it avail him, whether ordinary ministers be ambassadors for Christ, or not? If faith be a mere *passive* reception of the truth, it were as improper for the apostles to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, as for ordinary ministers to do so. Extraordinary powers could not render that consistent which is in itself absurd.

But I need say the less on this head, as Mr. M'Lean, in the First Part of his *Thoughts on the Calls and Invitations of the Gospel*, has not only alleged the foregoing passages, with others, but shown

their connexion and pertinency to the point at issue. Suffice it for me to say, that a system which requires the disuse of the most distinguished means pertaining to the ministry of the word, must be fundamentally erroneous, and of a tendency to render the good news of salvation of none effect.*

"To urge unbelievers," says Mr. Sandeman, "to any shadow of obedience to the gospel, as preparative to justification by faith, can have no other effect than to lead them to establish their own righteousness, and to stand in awe of the preacher."† Obedience to the gospel, in Mr. Sandeman's view, is the *effect* of faith; the scriptures, however, as we have seen, make faith itself to be obedience, and unbelief to be disobedience. If, by "preparative," he mean any thing which contributes to the *ground* or *reason* of justification, what he says of its self-righteous tendency is true; and the same would be true of his "notion," or "bare belief:" but to represent obedience to the gospel, as necessary *in the established order of things* to justification, is to represent it according to the whole current of scripture, as is manifest from the foregoing passages; and this can have no self-righteous tendency.

He that believeth *worketh not in respect of justification.* He does not deserve what he obtains, but receives it as a free gift; and it is of the nature of faith so to receive it. We can distinguish between a man who lives by his *labours*, and one that lives by *alms;* and without denying that the latter is active in receiving

* It becomes me here to acknowledge, that, in the *Appendix* to the last edition of *the Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*, I was guilty of an oversight, in attributing many of the foregoing sentiments to Mr. M'Lean, which did not belong to him. This mis-statement was owing to my having, at the time, entirely forgot his piece *on the Calls of the Gospel*, and my considering an anonymous performance, entitled *Simple Truth*, written by a Mr. Bernard, as his. It is true I had the means of knowing better, and should have been more attentive to them: in this, however, lay the whole of my fault. It never was my design, for a moment, to misrepresent Mr. M. or any other man; nor did I ever feel the least reluctance to make the most explicit acknowledgment.

I may add, though I am sorry that I mistook him, yet I am glad I was mistaken. The difference between us is so much the less, which, to any one who wishes to unite with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, as far as possible, must afford a degree of satisfaction.

† Epistolary Correspondence, p. 29.

them, can clearly discern that his mode of living is directly opposed to that of the other. He that should contend that living by alms actively received was the same thing as living by works, would not be reckoned a reasoner, but a driveller.

To set ourselves against the practice of the prophets and apostles, in order to support the freeness of justification, is supporting the ark with unhallowed hands; or, as Mr. M'Lean expresses it, *replying against God.* "Cannot the wicked," continues he, "be exhorted to believe, repent, and seek the Lord, and be encouraged to this by a promise of success, (Isa. lv. 6, 7.) without—making the success to depend on human merit? Are such exhortations and promises always to be suspected of having a dangerous and self-righteous tendency? Instead of taking them in their plain and simple sense, must our main care always be to guard against some supposed self-righteous use of them, till we have explained away their whole force and spirit, and so distinguished and refined upon them as to make men more afraid to comply with them than to reject them, lest they should be guilty of some exertion of mind or body, some good disposition or motion towards Christ, which is supposed to be the highest wickedness, and a despising of the work of Christ?"*

I can assure you, that, while I feel sorry to have mistaken Mr. M'Lean on this subject, I am not a little happy in being able to make such important extracts as the above from his writings. Yet when I think of some of the principles which he still avows, I feel concerned at what appears to me his inconsistency: and not merely his, but that of many others whom I sincerely esteem.

If, after what has passed, I could hope for a candid attention, I would intreat Mr. M'Lean, and others like-minded with him, to consider whether that *practical neglect* of calls and invitations to the unconverted which is said to prevail wherever these sentiments are imbibed, and which he almost acknowledges to have attended his own ministry, has not arisen from this cause.† So long as he

*Thoughts on Calls, &c. p. 36.

† His words are "However negligent I may be in urging sinners to repentance, it has always been my firm belief that not only the unconverted, but even the converted themselves, need not often to be called to repentance, and that in order to forgiveness." Reply, p. 36.

considers faith as something in which the will has no concern, instead of my being surprised at his feeling a difficulty in carrying the principles pleaded for in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel* into execution, I should be much more surprised at the contrary. If he be able to exhort sinners to repent and believe the gospel, it is more than I should be with his professed principles. So far as I know myself, I could not possibly call or invite any man to that in which his will had no concern, without feeling at the same time that I insulted him.

It may seem a little remarkable, that this system, and that of the high, or Hyper-calvinists in England, which in almost all other things are opposite, should on this point be agreed. The one confines believing to the understanding, the other represents sinners, awakened sinners at least, as being willing to believe, but unable to do so, any more than to take wings and fly to heaven. Hence neither of them hold it consistent to call on sinners to believe in Christ; nor *is it consistent with their principles;* but how it is that they do not perceive, by the uniform practice of Christ and his apostles, that these principles are antiscriptural, I cannot otherwise account for, than by ascribing it to the perverting influence of hypothesis.

LETTER IV.

ON THE FAITH OF DEVILS AND NOMINAL CHRISTIANS.

My Dear Friend,

You are aware that the apostle James speaks of some whose faith was dead, being alone; and that, in answer to their boastings, he reminded them that the devils also believed and trembled. From hence it has been generally thought there must be an essential difference between the *nature* of the faith of nominal Christians and devils on the one hand, and that of true Christians on the other. But this would overturn a leading principle of the Sandemanian system. Its advocates, therefore, have generally contended, that "whosoever among men believes what devils do about the Son of God, are born of God, and shall be saved;"* and that the design of the Apostle was not to *compare*, but rather to *contrast* it with that of the nominal Christian; the latter as having no effect on the mind, the former as causing its subjects to tremble. It has also been commonly maintained, on that side of the question, that the faith of which the apostle James speaks, instead of being of a different *nature* from that of true Christians, was in reality nothing but profession, or "*saying* I have faith." "The design of the Apostle," it has been said, "is to represent, that faith, whether it be on earth or in hell, if it really existed, and was not merely pretended, or professed, was always productive of corresponding works."

* Ecking's Essays, p. 107.

As the whole argument seems to rest upon the question, whether the faith of nominal Christians be here compared to that of devils or contrasted with it, and as the solution of this question involves a fundamental principle of the system, it is worthy of a particular examination.

The words of the apostle are as follow: *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.—Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead.* Chap. ii. 14—20.

If the design be to contrast the faith of devils with that of nominal Christians, the apostle must undoubtedly mean to render the latter a nonentity, or a mere pretence, and to hold up the former as a reality; and what is more, to represent the "trembling" of the fallen spirits as a species of good fruit, good at least in its nature, and wanting nothing to render it saving but the circumstantial interference of a more favourable situation.

To this view of the passage I have several objections.—

First: The Apostle does not treat the faith of nominal Christians as a nonentity, but as something which existed, though void of life, as "a dead body without the spirit." On the principle here opposed there is no such thing as a dead faith; that which is so called being mere pretence. The party is, indeed represented as saying he has faith, but the same may be alleged of the true Christian with respect to works. ver. 18. If, from hence, the faith of the one be considered as a nonentity, the works of the other must be the same.

Secondly: The place in which the faith of devils is introduced proves that it is for the purpose of *comparison*, and not of *contrast*. If it had been for the latter, it should have been intro-

duced in verse 18, and classed with the operative belief of true Christians, rather than in verse 19, where it is classed with that of nominal Christians. The argument then would have been this: 'Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works: the devils believe and tremble; but thou believest and tremblest not: therefore thy faith is a mere pretence.'

Thirdly: The copulative particle "also," instead of the disjunctive, determines it to be a *comparison*, and not a *contrast*. If it were the latter, the argument requires it to have been thus expressed:—'Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well: but the devils believe and tremble.' If καὶ be rendered *and*, or *even*, instead of also, as it often is, yet the meaning is the same. 'Thou believest there is one God: thou doest well; and the devils believe and tremble: or, *even* the devils believe and tremble.' None of these forms of expressions convey the idea of contrast, but of likeness.

Judge my friend, and let the reader judge, whether the meaning of the Apostle be not expressed in the following paraphrase: 'show me, if thou canst, a faith which is of any value without works, and I will show thee a faith which is of value by its fruits. Thou believest that there is one God; a great matter truly! and may not the same be said of the worst of beings? yea, and more: for they, having felt the power of God's anger, not only believe but tremble; whereas thy faith suffers thee to live at ease. But as theirs, with all their trembling, is of no account, neither is thine; for faith without holy fruits is dead.'

If the language of the Apostle may be understood as a *contrast* it may be used to express that which subsists between other things that differ, as well as these. For example: Between the faith of Christians and that of Jews. But the absurdity of this would strike any reader of common discernment. 'Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: Christians also believe and obey! To make sense of it, it should be, *But* Christians believe and obey. On the other hand, make an experiment in an instance of likeness, and the language is plain and easy. One boasts that he is not a heathen, nor a Jew, nor a Deist, but a Christian; while yet he is under the dominion of avarice. A man

might say to him, "Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well: Felix the heathen was so far convinced of this, and, what is more, trembled: yet Felix's convictions were of no value, and brought forth no good fruit; neither are thine, for faith without works is dead.'

There is no reason to conclude that the faith and trembling of devils differ in any thing, except in degree, from the convictions and trembling of Felix: if, therefore, the former would in our circumstances have terminated in salvation, why did not the latter, whose situation was sufficiently favourable, so to terminate? The convictions of James's nominal Christian might not be so strong as those of Felix, and his might not be so strong as those of the fallen angels; but in their nature they were one and the same. The first was convinced that there was one God; but it was mere light, without love. If, like what is said of the stony-ground hearers, a portion of joy at first attended it, yet the gospel having no root in his mind, and being in circumstances wherein he saw no remarkable displays of the divine majesty, it made no durable impression upon him. The second might also be convinced that there was a God, and neither were his convictions accompanied by love, but "righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come," being set before him, he "trembled." The last are convinced of the same truth, and neither are their convictions accompanied by love; but, being placed in circumstances wherein the awful majesty of God is continually before their eyes, they already know in part, by sad experience, the truth of his threatnings, and tremble in expectation of greater torments.

There is just as much holiness in each of these cases as in the trembling of an impenitent malefactor under the gallows. To reckon it, in any of them, therefore, among "the corresponding fruits which always attend faith if it really exists," is to reckon as fruit, that which the scriptures reject as unworthy of the name. Of the four sorts of hearers, only one brought forth fruit.

It is remarkable that Mr. M'Lean, after what he has written, when discoursing on the parable of the sower, particularly on those who are said to have "believed for a while," should introduce the following sentiment in the form of an *objection*. "Such

as fall away have never been enlightened in the knowledge of the truth, nor really believe the gospel; but had only *professed* to believe." His answer to this objection is still more remarkable. "The scripture," he says, "supposes them to have been once enlightened—to have received the knowledge of the truth, and of the way of righteousness—to have believed for a while—and to have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: see Heb. vi. 4. x. 26. Luke viii. 13. 2 Peter ii. 20. And their falling away after such attainments is that which constitutes the very sin of apostacy, and by which the guilt of it is aggravated. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." *Sermons*, p. 66.

All this I account very good, though I should not have expected it from Mr. M. But his refusing, after this, to admit an *essential* difference between the faith of these apostates and that of true believers, is most remarkable of all. If the difference lie not in the nature of their faith, nor in the nature of the things believed, against which he also reasons, where does it lie? They must, one would think, have been true believers so far as they went, and so long as they continued to believe; and their falling away must afford an example of the apostacy of true believers. But if a person may be a true believer at one time, and an apostate at another, he can have no scriptural ground at any period of his life, from any consciousness of believing the gospel, to conclude on his own particular salvation. Yet this is what Mr. M. has pleaded for in his treatise on the *Commission*. Moreover, if there be not an *essential* difference between the nature of the faith of apostates, and that of true believers, why does he himself, when describing them, write as follows? "Whatever appearances of faith there may be in false professors, they have not the same perception of the truth, nor that persuasion of it upon its proper evidence, which real believers have."* I do not say of Mr. M. as he does of me, that "he can take either side of the question as he finds

* Works, Vol. II. p. 96

occasion:" but this I say, he appears to me to feel the force of some truths which do not well comport with some of his former reasonings; and not being able, it should seem, to reconcile them, he leaves them unreconciled.

Surely it were more agreeable to the truth, and to the passages on which he discourses, to admit of an *essential* difference between the faith of nominal and real Christians. In discoursing on the "good ground" in the parable, he very properly represents true believers, and them only, as being "taught by the special illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit;" but surely that which is the fruit of this special influence possesses a special *nature*. Why else do we read that *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;* and why does it denominate a man spiritual?* We may not, as he says, be "able to distinguish, in the first impressions of the gospel, the faith of a stony-ground hearer from that of a true believer;" but it does not follow that there *is* not an essential difference notwithstanding.

The unrenewed character, with all his knowledge, *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*. He perceives not the intrinsic evil of sin, and, consequently, discerns not the intrinsic excellence of the knowledge of Christ. That in the gospel which pleases him is, its giving relief to his troubled conscience. Hence "all his godliness," as Mr. Sandeman says, "consists in love to that which first relieved him."

We have been told more than once, that "there need be no question about *how* we believe, but *what* we believe." Mr. M'Lean will answer this, that "the *matter*, or *object* of belief, even in apostates, is said to be the word of the kingdom—the truth—the way of righteousness—the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and what other object of faith have true believers?" *Sermons*, pp. 66, 67.

I have no objection to allowing, however, that if we believe the very truth as it is in Jesus, there can be nothing wanting in the *manner* of believing it. But though this be true, and though an inquirer after the way of salvation ought to be directed to the

* John iii. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 15.

saving doctrine of the cross, rather than to the workings of his own mind concerning it, yet there *is* in the workings of a believer's mind towards it something essentially different from those of the merely nominal Christian; and which when the inquiry comes to be, 'Am I a believer?' ought to be pointed out. He not only believes truth which the other does not, but believes the same truths in a different manner. In other words, he believes them on different grounds, and with different affections. That which he knoweth is, in measure, "as he ought to know it." He discerns spiritual things *in a spiritual manner;* which is the only manner in which they can be discerned as they are.

It might be said, there need be no question about *how* we repent, or hope, or love, or pray; but *what* we repent of, what we hope for, what we love, and what we pray for. And true it is, that if we repent of sin as sin, hope for the things which the gospel promises, love the true character of God and all that bears his image, and pray for those things which are according to his will, there will be nothing wanting as to the manner: but it does not follow that there *is* no difference as to the manner of these exercises in true Christians and in merely nominal ones. Our being right as to the objects may be a *proof* of our being right as to the manner, as the needle's pointing to the magnet proves the correspondence of the nature of the one with that of the other: but as in this case we should not say, it is of no account whether the needle be made of steel or of some other substance, so that it points to the magnet; neither in the other should we consider the nature of spiritual exercises as a matter of no account, but merely the objects on which they terminate.

When we read concerning the duty of prayer, that *the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him* IN TRUTH; and that *we know not what to pray for* AS WE OUGHT, we infer that there is something in the nature of a good man's prayers which distinguishes them from others. But there is just the same reason for inferring that there is something in the nature of a good man's knowledge, which distinguishes it from that of others: for as he only that is assisted by the Holy Spirit prays *as he ought*, so he only that is taught of God knoweth any thing *as he ought to know*.

The holy nature of living faith may be difficult, and even impossible to be ascertained but by its effects; as it is difficult if not impossible, to distinguish some seeds from others, till they have each brought forth their respective fruits; but a difference there *is*, notwithstanding. If there need be no inquiry as to the nature of faith, but merely concerning its objects, how was it that the Corinthians who, by their unworthy spirit and conduct, had rendered their being Christ's disciples *indeed* a matter of doubt, should be told to *examine themselves* whether they were in the faith, and should be furnished with this criterion, that, if they were true believers, and not reprobates, or such as would be disapproved as dross, *Jesus Christ was in them!* On the principle here opposed, they should have examined, not themselves, but merely their creed, or *what* they believed, in order to know whether they were in the faith.

If the faith of devils would have issued in their salvation, provided, like us, they have been placed in circumstances of hope, it will follow that faith is not produced by the grace of the Holy Spirit, but merely by Divine Providence. No one, I presume, will ascribe the belief of devils to the Holy Spirit: whatever they believe must be owing to the situation in which they are placed, and the circumstances attending them. But if faith may be the mere effect of situation and circumstances in one case, why not in another? Sandemanians have often been charged with setting aside the work of the Spirit, and have often denied the charge: but, whatever may be said of their other principles, their notion of the faith of devils must sap the foundation of that important doctrine. If this notion be true, all that is necessary is, that the party be placed under the influence of truth clearly stated and sufficiently impressive, and within the limits of the promise of salvation. All the change, therefore, which is necessary to eternal life may be wrought by only a proper adjustment of moral causes. Only place mankind in circumstances in which their minds shall be impressed with terror equal to that of the fallen angels, and let the promise of salvation to believers be continued as it is, and all would be saved. And with respect to the fallen angels themselves, only extend to them the promise to believers, and they are at

once in a state of salvation. Such on this hypothesis, would have been the happy condition of both men and devils: but the hope of mercy and the sense of wrath are both rendered abortive for want of being united. Providence places sinners on earth under the hope of salvation; but then they are not in circumstances sufficiently impressive, and so it comes to nothing. In hell the circumstances are sufficiently impressive; and they actually believe: but then there is no hope, and so again it comes to nothing!

Surely the parable of the rich man and Lazarus might suffice to teach us the insufficiency of all means to bring sinners to God, when we are assured that if they believed not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead. I am far from accusing all who have pleaded for the faith of devils being such as would be saving in our circumstances, as *designing* to undermine the work of the spirit; but that such is its tendency is, I presume sufficiently manifest.

Nor is this all: not only is the influence of the Spirit set aside, in favour of the mere influence of moral suasion, but *the fruits of the Spirit* are made to consist of that which is the ordinary effect of such influence. "When any person on earth," it has been said, "believes Jesus (who is now invisible) with equal assurance as the devils, he rejoices in hope, is animated by love to him, and feels disposed to obey his will, and to resist his own evil inclinations."

There are, I grant, sensations in the human mind which arise merely from the influences of hope and fear, and which bear a near resemblance to the fruits of the Spirit; but they are not the same. The judgments of God inflicted upon the carnal Israelites in the wilderness, caused the survivors to tremble, and wrought in them a great care to be more religious, and to resist their evil inclinations. *When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned early after God; they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.* Such was the effect of moral influence or of the word and works of God: but what follows? *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, they lied unto him with their tongues:* FOR THEIR HEART WAS NOT RIGHT WITH HIM, *neither were they steadfast in his covenant.* Thus, on

the approach of death, we still see men greatly affected. Light as they may have made of religion before, they now believe enough to make them tremble. At such times, it is common for them to think how good they would be, and what a different life they would lead, if it would please God to restore them. And should a favourable turn be given to their affliction, they are affected in another way; they weep, and thank God for their hopes of recovery, not doubting but they shall become other men. But I need not tell you, or the reader, that all this may consist with a heart at enmity with the true character of God, and that it frequently proves so, by their returning, as soon as the impression subsides, to their old courses. The whole of this process may be no more than an operation of self-love, or, as Mr. Sandeman calls it, "a love to that which relieves them," which is something at a great remove from the love of God, and therefore is not "godliness." Godliness has respect to God, and not merely to our own relief. The distress of an ungodly mind, consisting only in fearful apprehension of consequences, may be relieved by any thing that furnishes him with a persuasion of the removal of those consequences. It may be from an idea that he has performed the conditions of salvation; or from an impulse that his sins are forgiven; or from his imagining that he "sees God just in justifiying him, ungodly as he stands." Any of these considerations will give *relief;* and no man will be so wanting to himself, as not to "love that which relieves him." There may be some difference in these causes of relief: the first may be derived from something in ourselves; and the last may seem to arise from what Christ has done and suffered: but if the undertaking of Christ be merely viewed as a relief to a sinner, we overlook its chief glory; and the religion that arises from such views is as false as the views themselves are partial.

The first idea in the doctrine of the cross is, *Glory to God in the highest.* Its proclaiming *peace on earth, and good will to men* is consequent on this. But that which occupies the first place in the doctrine itself, must occupy the first place in the belief of it. The faith of the gospel corresponds with the gospel: *So we preached and so ye believed.* God will assert his own glory, and

we must subscribe to it, before we are allowed to ask or hope for the forgiveness of our sins, as is clearly taught us in what is called the Lord's prayer. He, therefore, that views the cross of Christ merely as an expedient to relieve the guilty, or only subscribes to the justice of God in his condemnation, when conceiving himself delivered from it, has yet to learn the first principles of Christianity. His rejoicing in the justice of God, *as satisfied by the death of Christ*, while he hates it in itself considered, is no more than rejoicing in a dreaded tyrant being appeased, or somehow diverted from coming to hurt him. And shall we call this the love of God? To make our deliverance from divine condemnation the condition of our subscribing to the justice of it, proves, beyond all contradiction, that we care only for ourselves, and that the love of God is not in us. And herein, if I may adopt Mr. Sandeman's term, consists the very "poison" of his system. It is one of the many devices for obtaining relief to the mind, without justifying God, and falling at the feet of the Saviour; or, which is the same thing, without *repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The doctrine of the cross presupposes the equity and goodness of the divine law, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exposedness of the sinner to God's righteous curse, and his utter insufficiency to deliver his soul. To believe this doctrine, therefore, must needs be to subscribe with our very heart to these principles, as they respect ourselves; and so to receive salvation as being what it is, a message of pure grace, through a mediator. Such a conviction as this never possessed the mind of a fallen angel, nor of a fallen man untaught by the special grace of God.

I am yours, &c

LETTER V.

ON THE CONNEXION BETWEEN REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD, AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

My dear Friend,

The advocates of this system do not consider the order in which these graces are ordinarily introduced in the New Testament as being the true order of nature, and therefore generally reverse it, putting faith before repentance, and invariably placing repentance among the effects of faith. A sinner, therefore, has no spiritual sense of the evil of sin, till he has believed in the Saviour, and stands in a justified state. Then, being forgiven all trespasses, and reconciled to God through the death of his Son, he is melted into repentance.

The question is not whether the gospel when received by faith, operates in this way; for of this there can be no doubt. Nothing produces godly sorrow for sin like a believing view of the suffering Saviour. Nor is it denied, that to be grieved for having dishonoured God we must first believe that he *is;* and before we can come to him in acceptable worship, that through a mediator he is *the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Without a mediator, repentance, even if it could have existed, must have been hopeless. I have not such an idea of the the sinner being brought to repentance antecedently to his believing in Christ for salvation, as Mr. Sandeman had of his believing antecedently to repentance. According to him, he believes and is justified, not mere-

ly *considered* as ungodly, or *without any consideration of godliness* in him, but actually "ungodly as he stands," and then, and not till then, begins to love God, and to be sorry for his sin. This is manifestly holding up the idea of *an impenitent believer*, though not one that continues such. But the antecedency which I ascribe to repentance does not amount to this. I have no conception of a sinner being so brought to repentance as to sustain the *character* of a penitent, and still less to obtain the forgiveness of sin, previously to his falling in the way of salvation. I believe it is not possible for a sinner to repent, and at the same time to reject the Saviour. The very instant that he perceives the evil of sin so as to repent of it, he cannot think of the Saviour without believing in him. I have, therefore, no notion of *a penitent unbeliever*. All that I contend for is, that in the order of cause and effect, whatever may be said as to the order of time, repentance precedes as well as follows the faith of Christ; and that faith in Christ cannot exist without repentance for sin. A sense of sin appears to me essential to believing in the Saviour; so much so, that without it, the latter would not only be a mere "notion," but an essentially defective one.

It is admitted, on both sides, that there is a priority of *one or other* of these graces in the order of nature, so as that one is influenced by the other; and if no other priority were pleaded, neither the idea of a penitent unbeliever on the one hand, nor an impenitent believer on the other, would follow: for it might still be true, as Mr. M'Lean acknowledges, that "none believe who do not repent," and as I also acknowledge, that none repent who, according to the light they have, do not believe. But if we maintain, not only that faith is prior in the order of nature, but that, antecedently to any true sorrow for sin, we must "see God to be just in justifying us ungodly as we stand," this is clearly maintaining the notion of an impenitent believer.

From these introductory remarks, it will appear that I have no objection to faith being considered as temporary with repentance in the order of time, provided the latter were made to consist in an acquiescence with the gospel way of salvation, so far as it is understood: but if it be made to include such a clear view of the

gospel as necessarily brings peace and rest to the soul, I believe that repentance for sin often precedes it, even in the order of time.

Such is the connexion between repentance and faith in the scriptures, that the one commonly supposes the other. Repentance, when followed by the remission of sins, supposes faith in the Saviour; (Luke xxiv. 47.) and faith, when followed with justification, equally supposes repentance for sin.

Attempts have been made by criticising on the word μετανοια, to explain away, as it should seem, the proper object of repentance, as if it were *a change of mind* with regard to the gospel. "Repentance," says Mr. S. "is the change of a man's mind to love the truth, which always carries in it a sense of shame and regret at his former opposition to it."* But this is confounding repentance and faith objectively considered. The objects of both are so marked in the apostolic ministry, that one would think they could not be honestly mistaken. Repentance is *toward God*, and faith is *toward our Lord Jesus Christ*: the one has immediate respect to the Lawgiver, the other to the Saviour.

It cannot be denied, that the order in which the New Testament commonly places repentance and faith is in direct opposition to what our opponents plead for; and what is more, that the former is represented as influencing the latter. This is manifest in the following passages: *Repent ye and believe the gospel. Testifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.—They repented not, that they might believe him.—If God peradventure might give them repentance* TO THE ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE TRUTH. Mr. Sandeman, Mr. M'Lean, and all the writers on that side of the question, very rarely make use of this language; and when they have occasion to write upon the subject, ordinarily reverse it. To accord with their ideas it should have been said, 'Believe the gospel and repent.—Testifying faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance toward God.—They believed not, that they might repent.—If God peradventure may give them faith to repent.'

* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, p. 402.

To this I add, it is impossible, in the nature of things, to believe the gospel but as being made sensible to that which renders it necessary. The guilty and lost state of sinners goes before the revelation of the grace of the gospel: the latter, therefore, cannot be understood or believed, but as we are convinced of the former. There is no grace in the gospel, but upon the supposition of the holiness, justice, and goodness of the law. If God be not in the right, and we in the wrong; if we have not transgressed without cause, and be not fairly condemned, grace is no more grace, but a just exemption from undeserved punishment. And as faith must needs correspond with truth, it is impossible that we should believe the doctrine of salvation by grace, in an impenitent state of mind, or without feeling that we have forfeited all claim to the divine favour. We cannot see things but as they are to be seen: to suppose that we first believe in the doctrine of free grace, and then, as the effect of it, perceive the evil of sin, and our just exposedness to divine wrath, is like supposing a man first to appreciate the value of a physician, and by this means to learn that he is sick. It is true the physician may visit the neighborhood, or the apartments of one who is in imminent danger of death, while he thinks himself mending every day; and this circumstance may be held up by his friends as a motive to him to consider of his condition, and to put himself under his care. It is thus that the coming of Christ and the setting up of his spiritual kingdom in the world were alleged as motives to repentance, both to Jews and Gentiles. *Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent ye therefore. The times past of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* But as it would not follow in the one case that the sick man could appreciate the value of the physician till he felt his sickness, neither does it follow in the other that faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ precedes such a sense of the evil of sin as involves the first workings of repentance toward God.

To argue as some have done, from the motives of repentance being fetched from the gospel, that it supposes their believing the gospel ere they could repent, proves too much; for it is not to repentance only, but to faith, that the coming of Christ's kingdom

is held up as a motive: but to say that this supposes their belief of the gospel, is saying they must believe in order to believing.

That *a conviction of sin* (whether it include the first workings of repentance or not) is necessary to faith in Christ, is a matter so evident, that those who have declaimed most against it, have not been able to avoid such a representation of things. It is remarkable, that when Mr. Sandeman comes to describe his "ungodly man," he always contrives to make him not only full of distress, but divested of all *self-righteous pride*: he represents him as conceiving that there are none more ripe for hell than he, and as having no hope but in the great propitiation."* Thus also Mr. Ecking, when *describing* a "mere sinner," represents him as one who "feels himself in a perishing condition, and is conscious that he deserves no favour."†

We must not say that repentance, or any degree of a right spirit, so precedes faith in Christ as to enter into the nature of it; but if we will but call the sinner by a few hard names, we may describe him in coming to the Saviour as sensible of his utter unworthiness, as divested of self-righteousness, and as ripe for hell in his own eyes! In short, we may depict him as the publican who sought mercy under a humiliating sense of his utter unworthiness to receive it, so that we still call him ungodly. And to this we have no objection, so that it be understood of the character under which he is justified in the eye of the Lawgiver; but if it be made to mean that at the time of his justification he is in heart an enemy of God, we do not believe it. If he be, however, why do not these writers describe him as an enemy ought to be described? They teach us elsewhere that "an attachment to self-righteousness is natural to man as depraved;" how then came these ungodly men to be so divested of it? Why are they not represented as thinking themselves in a fair way for heaven, and that if God does not pardon them he will do them wrong? Such is the ordinary state of mind of ungodly men, or mere sinners, which is just as opposite to that which they are constrained to represent, as the spirit of the pharisee was to that of the publican.

* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, pp. 46. 48. † Essays, p. 41.

Mr. M'Lean will tell us that "this is that part of the scheme, whereby persons, previously to their believing in Christ, are taught to extract comfort from their convictions."* But, whatever Mr. M. may think or say, I hope others will give me credit when I declare that we have no idea of any well-grounded comfort being taken antecedently to believing in Christ. The publican is described as *humbling himself* before God exalted him: but he did not derive comfort from this. If, instead of looking to the mercy of God, he had done this, it would have been a species of pharisaic self-exaltation. But it does not follow from hence that there *was* nothing spiritually good in his self-abasement.

But Mr. M. "believes a person may be so convicted in his conscience as to view himself *merely as a guilty sinner;* that is, as having no righteousness to recommend him to the favour of God; and that under such conviction his sense of the evil of sin will not be confined to its *punishment;* but his conscience or moral sense will tell him that he deserves punishment at the hands of a righteous God."†

Mr. M'Lean admits, then, the necessity of conviction of sin, previously in the order of things, to faith in Christ; only there is no holiness, and consequently no true repentance in it. I have allowed in Letter I. that many convictions are to be resolved into the mere operations of an enlightened conscience, and do not issue in true conversion. I may add, I consider all conviction of sin which *does not in its own nature lead to the Saviour*, as of this description. It matters not how deep the distress of a sinner may be; so long as it is accompanied by an unwillingness to be saved by mere grace though a mediator, there is no holiness in it, nor any thing that deserves the name of repentance. An enlightened conscience, I allow, will force us to justify God and condemn ourselves on many occasions. It was thus in Pharoah, when he said, *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.* And this his sense of the evil of sin might not be "confined to its *punishment:*" his "conscience or moral sense might tell him that he deserved punishment at the hand of a righteous God." So far then

* Reply, p. 148. † Ibid. p. 149.

we are agreed. But if Pharoah had a *just* sense of the evil of sin, it would not have left him where it did. There was an essential difference between what he saw by the terrors of God's judgments, and what Paul saw when "sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful." Nor can I believe that any sinner was ever so divested of self-righteous hope as to consider himself *a mere sinner*, who yet continued to reject the Saviour: for this were the same thing as for him to have *no ground* to stand upon, either false or true; but he who submits not to the righteousness of God, is, in some form or other, going about to establish his own righteousness.

There is, I apprehend, an important difference between the case of a person, who, whatever be his convictions, is still averse from giving up every claim, and falling at the feet of the Saviour; and that of one whose convictions lead him to take refuge in the gospel, *as far as he understands it*, even though at present he may have but a very imperfect view of it. I can clearly conceive of the convictions of the first as having no repentance or holiness in them but not so of the last. I believe repentance has begun to operate in many persons of this description, who as yet have not found that peace or rest for their souls, which the gospel is adapted to afford. In short, the question is, whether there be not such a thing as *spiritual conviction*, or conviction which proceeds from the special influence of the spirit of God, and which in its own nature invariably leads the soul to Christ? It is not necessary that it should be known by the party, or by others, to be so at the time, nor can it be known but by its effects, or till it *has led* the sinner to believe in Christ alone for salvation. But this does not prove but that it may exist. And when I read of sin by the commandment becoming exceeding sinful; of our being through the law, dead to the law, *that we might live unto God;* of the law being appointed, as a school-master to bring us to Christ, *that we might be justified by faith;*—I am persuaded it does exist; and that to say all spiritual conviction of sin is by means of the gospel, is antiscriptural and absurd.

In places where the gospel is preached, and where persons have long heard it, it is not supposed that they are necessarily first

led to think of the law, and of themselves as transgressors of it; and then, being convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin by it, are for the first time led to think of Christ. No, it is not the order of time, but that of cause and effect, for which I plead. It may be by thinking of the death of Christ himself that we are first led to see the evil of sin; but if it be so, this does not disprove the apostolic doctrine, that *by the law is the knowledge of sin.* If the death of Christ furnish us with this knowledge, it is *as honouring the precept and penalty of the law.* It is still, therefore by the law, as exemplified in him, that we are convinced.

A spirit of Grace and supplication, was to be poured *upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,* in consequence of which they were to look upon him whom they had pierced, *and mourn as for an only son, and to be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.* Is this mourning described as following, or as preceding their forgiveness? As preceding it. It is true, they are said first to *look upon him whom they had pierced;* but this view of the death of the Saviour is represented as working only in a way of conviction and lamentation: the view which gave peace and rest to their souls follows upon their mourning, and is thus expressed: *In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.*

Judge my friend, and let the reader judge, whether this account accords with our first viewing God as just, and justifying us ungodly as we stand; and then beginning to love him, and to repent of our having sinned against him. Judge whether it does not rather represent things in this order: First, *a spirit of grace and supplication* is poured upon the sinner; next he is led to think of what he has done against the Lord and his Christ, and mourns over it in the bitterness of his soul; and then gets relief by washing, as it were, in the fountain of his blood. Such was doubtless the process under Peter's sermon. Acts ii. 37, 38.

On the connexion of repentance and faith, I am at a loss to ascertain Mr. M'Lean's sentiments. He says indeed, that I know them; and suggests that I must have intentionally misrepresented

them.* But if they be so plain, I can only say my understanding is more dull than he supposes; for I do not yet comprehend how he can make repentance, in all cases a fruit of faith in Christ, and yet considers it as necessary to forgiveness. He acknowledges that "none believe who do not repent;" (p. 39.) and that repentance is "necessary to forgiveness." p. 36.) But forgiveness, though not the same thing as justification, is yet an essential part of it; if therefore, he allows repentance to be antecedent to forgiveness, that is the same thing in effect as allowing it to be antecedent to justification, or that the faith by which we are justified includes repentance. Yet he makes faith to be such a belief as excludes all exercise of the will or affections, and consequently repentance for sin. He also considers repentance as an immediate effect of faith, (p. 38.) and opposes the idea of any effect of faith being included in it as necessary, not merely as a procuring cause, but in the established order of things, to justification. But this, so far as I am able to understand things, is making repentance follow upon forgiveness, rather than necessary to it.

Mr. M'Lean adds, "Though repentance ought to be urged upon all who hear the gospel; and though none believe it who do not repent; yet I strongly suspect that it would be leading us astray, to press repentance upon them *before*, and in order to their believing the gospel." (p. 39.) And why does he not suspect the same thing of pressing the belief of the gospel before, and in order to their repentance? If indeed the gospel were withheld from sinners till they actually repent; or if it were suggested that they should first become penitents, and then think of being believers, this would be leading them astray: and the same might be said on the other side. If exhortations to repentance were withheld till the sinner had actually believed, or it were suggested that he should first become a believer, and then think of repenting, this would be as antiscriptural as the other. But why should we not content ourselves with the following examples of the New Testament,—*Repent and believe the gospel*? As Mr. M'Lean's placing faith before repentance does not require him to avoid tel-

* Reply, p. 26

ling sinners of the evil nature of sin till they have believed, nor to consider them as believers while they are impenitent, why does he impute such consequences to me, for placing repentance before faith ?

Mr. M'Lean refers to a passage in the preface to the first edition of *The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation*, as favouring these extravagant constructions. I had said, "No sort of encouragement or hope is held out in all the book of God, to any sinner *as such* considered." That which I meant at the time, was merely to disown that any sinner was encouraged to hope for eternal life without returning to God by Jesus Christ. Thus I explained it in my answer to *Philanthropos;* but, as I perceived the idea was not clearly expressed in the preface, and that the words were capable of an ill construction, I altered them in the second edition, and expressed my meaning as follows: "There is no dispute concerning who ought to be encouraged to consider themselves as entitled to the blessings of the gospel. Though sinners be freely invited to the participation of spiritual blessings, yet they have no interest in them, according to God's revealed will, while they continue in unbelief." I cannot consider Mr. M'Lean's *other* references to the first edition, after a second was in his hand, as fair or candid; and *this* appears to me unfair and uncandid in the extreme.

It has been common to distinguish repentance into *legal* and *evangelical;* and I allow there is a foundation in the nature of things for this distinction. The former arises from the consideration of our sin being a transgression of the holy, just, and good law of our Creator; the latter from the belief of the mercy of God as revealed in the gospel, and the consideration of our sin being committed notwithstanding, and even against it. But it appears to me, to have been too lightly taken for granted, that all *true* repentance is confined to the latter. The law and the gospel are not in opposition to each other: why then should repentance arising from the consideration of them, be so opposite as that the one should be false and the other true ?

If we wish to distinguish the false from the true, or that which needs to be repented of from that which does not, we may, per-

haps with more propriety, denominate them *natural* and *spiritual*: by the former, understanding that which the mere principles of unrenewed nature are capable of producing, and by the latter, that which proceeds from the supernatural and renovating influence of the Spirit of God.

Natural repentance, thus defined, is sorrow for sin, chiefly with respect to its consequences, accompanied, however, with the reproaches of conscience on account of the thing itself. It is composed of remorse, fear, and regret, and is often followed by a change of conduct. It may arise from a view of the law and its threatenings, in which case it hath no hope, but worketh death, on account of there being nothing but death held out by the law for transgressors. Or it may arise from a partial and false view of the gospel, by which the heart is often melted under an idea of sin being forgiven when it is not so; in this case it hath hope, but which being unfounded, it notwithstanding worketh death in a way of self-deception.

Spiritual repentance is sorrow for sin *as sin, and as committed against God.* It may arise from a view of the death of Christ, through which we perceive how evil and bitter a thing it is, and looking on him whom we have pierced, mourn as one mourneth for an only son. But it may also arise from the consideration of our sin being a transgression of the holy, just, and good law of God, and of our having dishonoured him without cause. Such a sense of the evil nature of sin as renders it *exceeding sinful*, includes the essence of true repentance. yet this, in the Apostle, did not arise from the consideration of the gospel, but *of the commandment.* It was therefore *legal* repentance: yet as its tendency was to render him "dead to the law" as a medium of justification, and to bring him to Christ *for life*, it was spiritual. It was repentance *unto life.*

The chief ground on which repentance toward God has been denied to precede faith in Christ in the order of nature is, that no man can repent of sin till he entertain the hope of forgiveness. Nay, it has been said, "No man can repent unless he know himself to be of God; and as this cannot be known till he hath received Christ, faith must precede repentance." If the principle that

supports this argument be true, we neither have, nor ought to have, any regard to God or man, but for our own sake. But if so, the command ought not to have been, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself;" but, 'Thou shalt love thyself with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy God and thy neighbour so far as they are subservient to thee.' Moreover, if so, the world, instead of being greatly depraved, is very nearly what it ought to be; for it is certainly not wanting in self-love, though it misses the mark in accomplishing its object.

Some have allowed that it is our duty to love God supremely, whether he save us or not; but that, nevertheless, the thing is impossible." If it be *physically* impossible it cannot be duty; for God requires nothing in respect of obedience but that we love him *with all our strength*. If it be only *morally* impossible, that is the same as its being so owing to the corrupt state of our minds. But we are not to suppose that God, in saving sinners, any more than in judging them, consults their depraved spirit, and adapts the gospel to it. On the contrary, it is the design of all that God does for us, to restore us to a right spirit. His truth must not bend to our corruptions; but our hearts must be "inclined to his testimonies." So far, therefore, as any man is renewed by the Spirit of God, so far is he brought to be of God's mind, and does what he ought to do. God's law is written in his heart.

Farther: If the principle that supports this argument be true, it will hold good in reference to men, as well as to God. And is is true that a man who is under just condemnation for breaking the laws, and who has no hope of obtaining a pardon, ought not to be expected to repent for his crime, and, before he die, to pray God to bless his king and country? On this principle, all confessions of this kind are of necessity mere hypocrisy. Even those of the dying thief in the gospel, so far as they respect the justice of his doom from his countrymen, must have been insincere; for he had no hope of his sentence being remitted. What would an offended father say, if the offender should require, as the condition of his repentance, a previous declaration of forgiveness, or even of a willingness to forgive? A willingness to forgive *might* be declared,

and it would heighten the criminality of the offender if after this he continued hardened; but for him to *require* it, and to avow that he could not repent of his sin upon any other condition, would be the height of insolence. Yet all this is pleaded for in respect of God. *If I be a Father, where is mine honour!*

Besides, how is a sinner to "know that he is of God," otherwise than as being conscious of repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ? Till he is sorry at heart for having dishonoured God, he is not of God, and therefore cannot know that he is so.

If some have gone into extremes in writing of "disinterested love," as Mr. M'Lean suggests, it does not follow that true religion has its origin in self-love. Most men, who make any pretence to serious Christianity, will allow that if sin be not hated *as sin*, it is not hated at all; and why we should scruple to allow that if God be not loved *as God*, he is not loved at all, I cannot conceive. I am not surprised however, that those who have been so long and so deeply imbibed in a system, a leading principle of which is, "that godliness consists in love to that which first relieves us," should write in the manner they do.

On some occasions, however, Mr. M'Lean himself can say as much in favour of "disinterested love," as his opponent, and can represent that which arises from "a mere principle of self-love" as being of no value. "There may be some resemblances of *repentance*," he says, "in fear, remorse, and sorrow of mind, occasioned by sin; as in Cain, Judas, Felix, &c. But a mere principle of self-love will make a man dread the consequences of sin, while he has prevalent inclinations to sin itself. There is a difference between mere fear and sorrow on account of sin, and a prevalent hatred of it; between hatred of sin itself, and mere hatred of its consequences; between that sorrow for sin which flows from the love of God and of holiness, and that which flows from an inferior principle. Men may have an aversion to some kinds of sin, because they interfere with others, or because they do not suit their natural constitutions, propensities, tempers, habits, age, worldly interests, &c. while they do not hate *all* sin universally, and consequently hate no sin *as such*, or from a proper principle." *Works*, Vol. II p. 95.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER VI.

ON THE CONNEXION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND DISPOSITION.

My Dear Friend,

You need not be told that this is a subject of prime importance, in the Sandemanian system. It every where considers knowledge as the one thing needful, and disposition as its natural and proper effect.

Mr. M'Lean represents me as maintaining that the understanding, or perceptive faculty in man, is directed and governed by his will and inclinations; and this he supposes to be the principle on which my arguments are principally founded; a principle which can only be true, he thinks, in cases where the original order of things is perverted by sin.* Whether these sentiments be just, or contain a fair statement of my views, we shall inquire as we proceed: at present, I only observe, that the state of the will, or disposition, is, in Mr. M'Lean's account governed invariably by the understanding; or, if in any instance it be otherwise, it is owing to the disorder introduced by sin. I should not have supposed, however, that sin could have perverted the established laws of nature. It certainly perverts the moral order of things, that is (as Dr. Owen represents it, to whom Mr. M. refers,) instead of the will being governed by judgment and conscience, judgment and conscience are often governed by prejudice. But there is nothing in all this subversive of the established laws of nature:

* Reply, p. 8, 9.

for it is a law recognized both by nature and scripture, that the disposition of the soul should influence its decisions. A humble and candid spirit is favourable, and a proud and uncandid spirit is unfavourable, to a right judgment.

"It is a maxim," says Mr. Ecking, "that has not yet been refuted, that the determination of the will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction, and notice of the understanding."* By the illumination, conviction, and notice of the understanding, must be meant, either what the mind judges to be right, or what it accounts agreeable. If the will were always determined by the first, there could be no such thing as knowing the will of God and not doing it. But I suppose this will not be pretended. It must, therefore, be of the last that Mr. Ecking writes. His meaning must be, that the will evermore follows the mind's view of the object *as agreeable*. But is it certain that the viewing of an object agreeable is properly and perfectly distinct from choosing it? President Edwards conceived it was not, and therefore did not affirm that the will was determined by the greatest apparent good, but merely, that "*the will always is as the greatest apparent good, or as what appears most agreeable is.*"† This is not saying that the will is determined by the understanding: for, as the same author goes on to prove, the cause of an object appearing agreeable to the mind may be 'the state, frame, or temper of the mind itself." But so far as this is the case, the judgment is determined by the state of the mind, rather than the state of the mind by the judgment.

A great deal of confusion on this subject has arisen from confounding simple knowledge, pertaining merely to the intellectual faculty, with that which is compound, or comprehensive of approbation. The former is with propriety distinguished from whatever pertains to the state of the will; but the latter is not, seeing it includes it.

Mr. M'Lean, speaking of certain characters, who had heard the gospel, says, "It is supposed that such men have now received some *information* which they had not before, both with respect to their danger, and the remedy of it, and"—what? that

* Essays, p. 54. † On the Will, *Part* I. Section II. p. 11.

their wills or dispositions are in that proportion changed? No, but "that they are hereby rendered quite *inexcusable* if they should neglect so great salvation; which neglect must now be the effect of perverseness and aversion, and not of *simple* ignorance. John iii. 19. xv. 2. 25."* I do not say of Mr. M. as he did of me, When I was only reasoning upon the principles of my opponents, that "he can take either side of the question as he finds occasion:" but this I say, that when writing in favour of the calls of the gospel, he felt himself impelled to admit principles of which, in his controversy on the other side, he has quite lost sight. The above statement appears to me to be very just, and as he here so properly distinguishes simple ignorance from ignorance which arises from aversion or neglect; the one as tending to excuse, the other to criminate: he cannot consistently object to my distinguishing between simple knowledge, which barely renders men inexcusable, and knowledge *inclusive of approbation*, which has the promise of eternal life.

Simple knowledge, or knowledge as distinguished from approbation, as a mere natural accomplishment, necessary to the performance of both good and evil, but in itself neither the one nor the other. Instead of producing love, it often occasions an increasing enmity, and in all cases renders sinners the less excusable. In this sense, the term *knowledge* and others related to it are used in the following passages: *The servant who* KNEW *his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.—When they* KNEW *God, they glorified him not as God.—If ye* KNOW *these things, happy are ye if ye do them.—If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin.—If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both* SEEN AND HATED *both me and my Father.*

But knowledge is much more frequently used in the scriptures, *as including approbation.* The Lord is said to *know* the righteous, and never to have *known* the workers of iniquity. To understand this of simple knowledge, would deprive God of his omniscience

* Thoughts on Calls, &c. p. 17.

As ascribed to men, it is what is denominated *a spiritual understanding*. It is not necessary to an obligation to spiritual duties, but it is necessary in the nature of things to the actual discharge of them. It may be said of the want of this, "The Lord hath not given you eyes to see, and ears to hear, to this day;" and that, without furnishing any excuse for the blindness of the parties. It is the wisdom from above, imparted by the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit.

That knowledge, in this sense of the term, produces holy affections is not denied. It is in itself holy, and contains the principle of universal holiness. It is that by which we discern the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which glory being beheld, assimilates us into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. But the question at issue respects knowledge in its simple and literal sense, or that which is purely intellectual, exclusive of all disposition; otherwise it would amount to no more than this, whether that which includes the seminal principle of holy affection (namely, *a sense of heart*) tends to produce it: which never was disputed.

The ground on which I am supposed to have proceeded is, "that the understanding, or perceptive faculty in man, is directed and governed by his will:" but this is a mistake: I ground no doctrine upon any theory of the human mind which I may have entertained; but on what I consider as the scriptural account of things; in which I find spiritual perception impeded by evil disposition, and promoted by the contrary.* Neither is the above a fair statement of my views. If what I have written implies any theory of the human mind, it is not that the understanding is in all cases governed by the will; but rather that they have a mutual influence on each other. I have allowed, in my *Appendix*, that volitions are influenced by motives or considerations which exist in the view of the mind; and I should think it is equally evident on the other hand, that our judgments are, in a great number of instances, determined by a previous state or disposition of the soul. In objects which do not interest the affections, the judg-

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

ment may be purely intellectual, and the choice may naturally follow according to its dictates; but it is not so in other cases as universal experience evinces.

"But must it not be owned," says Mr. M. in his Reply, "that so far as this is the case in man, it is an *irregular* exercise of his faculties, arising from the moral disorder of his lapsed nature, whereby judgment, reason, and conscience are weakened, perverted, and blinded, so as to be subjected to his will and corrupt inclinations?" (p. 8.) It must undoubtedly be owned that the influence of an *evil* disposition in producing an erroneous and false judgment is owing to this cause; and if that for which I plead were what Mr. M. elsewhere represents it, viz. *a prejudice in favour of a report which renders the mind regardless of evidence*, (p. 67.) the same might be said of all such judgment. But how, if the state of the will contended for should be that of a *deliverance from prejudice*, by which evidence comes to be properly regarded? It is not to the disorder introduced by sin, that we are to ascribe the general principle of the moral state or disposition of the soul having an influence on the judgment: for it is no less true that a humble, candid, and impartial spirit influences the belief of moral truth, or truth that involves in its consequences the devoting of the whole life to God, than that a selfish and corrupt spirit influences the rejection of it. Surely it is not owing to the human faculties being thrown into disorder, that a holy frame of mind in believers enables them to understand the scriptures better than the best expositor! The experience of every Christian bears witness that the more spiritually-minded he is, the better he is prepared for the discernment of spiritual things.

Mr. M'Lean thinks I have mistaken the meaning of the term *heart*, in applying it to the dispositions and affections of the soul, as distinguished from the understanding. When such phrases as *a heart of stone, a heart of flesh, a hard and impenitent heart, a tender heart, a heart to know the Lord, &c.* occur, though they *suppose* the intellectual faculty, yet there can be no doubt, I should think, of their expressing the state of the will and affections, rather than of the understanding. I have no objection, however, to the account given of the term by Dr. Owen, that "it generally denotes

the whole soul of man, and all the faculties of it, not absolutely, but as they are all *one principle of moral operations, as they all concur in our doing good or evil.*" The term may sometimes apply to what is simply natural; but it generally, as he says, denotes the principle of *moral* action, which being comprehended in love, must in all cases, whether it relate to good or evil, include affection. And thus, in his *Treatise on Justice*, Dr. Owen observes that, "Assent is an act of the understanding only; but believing is an act of the heart, which in scripture compriseth all the faculties of the soul as one entire principle of moral and spiritual duties. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.* Rom. x. 10; and it is frequently described by an act of the will, though it be not so alone. But without an act of the will no man can believe as he ought. See John v. 40. i. 12. vi. 35. We come to Christ as an act of the will; and let whosoever will, come: and to be willing is taken for believing. Psa. cx. 3. And unbelief is disobedience. Heb. iii. 18, 19." Chap. I. p. 108.

Nay, Mr. M. himself acknowledges nearly as much as this. He says, "The scriptures always represent the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit as exerted upon the heart, which includes not only the understanding, but the will and affections, or the prevalent inclinations and dispositions of the soul." Works, Vol. II. p. 91.

That disposition, in rational being, presupposes perception, I never doubted; but that it is *produced* by it, is much easier asserted than proved. Knowledge is a concomitant in many cases where it is not a cause. If all holy disposition be produced by just perceptions, all evil disposition is produced by unjust or erroneous ones. Indeed this is no more than Mr. M'Lean, on some occasions at least, is prepared to admit. He tells us that "the word of God represents the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of the mind, with regard to spiritual things, as the source of men's alienation from the life of God, and of their rebelling against him." (p. 77.) Does he really think, then, that the passages of scripture to which he refers mean simple ignorance?* If not, they make nothing

* Ephes. iv. 18, 19. Acts xxvi. 18. Ephes. vi. 12. Col. i. 13,

for his argument. Does he seriously consider the *blindness*, or *hardness* of heart, in Ephes. iv. 18, as referring to ignorance, *in distinction* from aversion, or as *including* it?* Can he imagine that the darkness in which Satan holds mankind is any other than a chosen and beloved darkness, described in the following passages? *They* LOVED *darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.—The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed.*

That voluntary blindness renders sinners estranged from God, I can easily understand, nor am I at any loss to conceive of its being "that by which Satan reigns, and maintains his power over the minds of men:" but I do not perceive, in any of these facts, the proof of disposition having its origin in ignorance. Two friends whom I will call Matthew and Mark, were one evening conversing on this subject, when the following sentiments were exchanged. All sin (said Matthew) arises from ignorance.—Do you think then, (said Mark,) that God will condemn men for what is owing to a want of natural capacity? O no, (said Matthew,) it is a *voluntary* ignorance to which I refer; a *not liking* to retain God in their knowledge. Then (said Mark) you reason in a circle: your argument amounts to this: All sin arises from ignorance, and this ignorance arises from sin; or, which is the same thing, from aversion to the light?

If Mr. M'Lean, or others, will maintain that sin is the effect of *simple* ignorance, (and this they must maintain, or what they hold is nothing different from that which they oppose,) let them seriously consider a few of its consequences, as drawn by some of our modern Infidels. It is on this principle that Mr. Goodwin, in his treatise on *Political Justice*, denies the original depravity of human nature; explains away all ideas of guilt, crime, desert, and accountableness; and represents the devil himself as a being of considerable virtue! Thus he reasons:

* πωρωσις, Parkhurst observes, is from πωρω, and signifies, *hardness, callousness*, or *blindness*. "it is not mere ignorance," says Dr. Owen. "but a stubborn resistance of light and conviction; an obdurate hardness, whence it rejects the impressions of divine truth." *Discourses on the Holy Spirit*, Book III. Chap. III.

"The moral characters of men originate in their perceptions. As there are no innate perceptions or ideas, there are no innate principles.—The moral qualities of men are the produce of the impressions made upon them, and THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN ORIGINAL PROPENSITY TO EVIL." Book I. Chap. III.

Again: "Vice is nothing more than error and mistake reduced to practice.—Acting from an ill motive is acting from a mistaken motive.—Under the system of necessity, (that is, as held by him,) the ideas of GUILT, CRIME, DESERT, and ACCOUNTABLENESS, HAVE NO PLACE." Book IV. Chap. IV.—VI. pp. 254. 314

Again: "Virtue is the offspring of the understanding.—It is only another name for a clear and distinct perception of the value of the object.—Virtue, therefore, is ordinarily connected with great talents.—Cæsar and Alexander had their virtues.—They imagined their conduct conducive to the general good.—The devil, as described by Milton, also WAS A BEING OF CONSIDERABLE VIRTUE!!! Why did he rebel against his maker? Because he saw no sufficient reason for that extreme inequality of rank and power which the Creator assumed.—After his fall, why did he still cherish the spirit of opposition? From a persuasion that he was hardly and injuriously treated.—He was not discouraged by the inequality of the contest?" Book IV. Chap. IV. App. No. 1. p. 261.

Allowing this writer his premises, I confess myself unable to refute his consequences. If all sin be the effect of ignorance, so far from its being *exceeding sinful*, I am unable to perceive any sinfulness in it. It is one of the clearest dictates in nature, and that which is suggested by every man's conscience, that whatever he does wrong, if he know no better, and his ignorance be purely intellectual, or as Mr. M'Lean calls it, *simple;* that is, if it be not owing to any neglect of means, but to the want of means, or of powers to use them, it is not his fault.

The intellectual powers of the soul, such as perception, judgment, and conscience, are not that to moral action which the first wheel of a machine is to those that follow; but that which light and plain directions are to a traveller, leaving him inexcusable if he walk not in the right way.

But I shall be told, that it is not natural, but spiritual knowledge, for which Mr. M'Lean pleads, as the cause of holy disposition. True : but he pleads for it upon the general principle of its being the established order of the human mind that disposition should be produced by knowledge. Moreover, if spiritual knowledge should be found *to include approbation*, it cannot, with propriety, be so distinguished from it as to be a cause of which the other is the effect : for to say that all disposition arises from knowledge, and that knowledge *includes approbation*, is to reason in a circle, exactly as, in the case just supposed, Matthew reasoned on all sin arising from ignorance, which ignorance *included aversion*.

That spiritual knowledge includes approbation in its very nature, and not merely in its effect, appears evident to me from two considerations. First: It is the opposite of *spiritual blindness*. 2 Cor. iv. 4—6. Ephes. v. 8. But spiritual blindness includes in its very nature, and not merely in its effect, an aversion to the truth. Mr. Ecking (whose *Essays on Grace, faith and Experience*, have been reprinted by the friends of this system, as containing what they account, no doubt, an able defence of their principles) allows the inability of the sinner to consist in his loving darkness rather than light, and his disinclination to depend upon a holy sovereign God, and not in the want of rational faculties. Describing this inability in other words, he considers it as composed of "error, ignorance and unbelief," in which he places the "disease" of the sinner, "THE VERY ESSENCE OF THE NATURAL MAN'S DARKNESS;" and the opposites of them he makes to be "truth, knowledge, and faith, which being implanted," he says, "the soul must be renewed." pp. 66, 67.* If Mr. E. understood what he wrote, he must mean to represent spiritual light as the proper opposite of spiritual darkness; and as he allows the latter, "in the very essence of it to include aversion," he must allow the former in the very essence of it to include approbation. Secondly: The objects perceived are of such a nature, as to be

* I have only the first Edition of Mr. E's Essays, and therefore am obliged to quote from it.

known only by a sense of their divine excellency, which contains in it more than a simple knowledge, even an approbation of the heart. Those who have written upon the powers of the soul, have represented "that whereby we receive ideas of beauty and harmony, as having all the characters of a *sense*, an *eternal sense*."* And Mr. Ecking, after all that he says against a principle of grace in the heart antecedently to believing, allows that "we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties."† But the very essence of scriptural knowledge consists in the discernment of divine beauties, or the *glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. To speak of faith in Christ antecedent to this, is only to speak at random. The reason given why the gospel report was not believed is, that in the esteem of men, the Messiah had *no form or comeliness in him, nor beauty, that they should desire him*. To say we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties, is therefore the same thing, in effect, as to say, we must have a spiritual principle before we can believe the gospel.

I will close this letter by an extract from President Edwards's *Treatise on the Affections*, not merely as showing his judgment, but as containing what I consider a clear, scriptural, and satisfactory statement of the nature of spiritual knowledge.

"If the scriptures are of any use to teach us any thing, there is such a thing as a *spiritual supernatural understanding* of divine things, that is peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints have nothing of. It is certainly a kind of understanding, apprehending, or discerning of divine things, that natural men have nothing of, which the Apostle speaks of, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* It is certainly a kind of seeing or discerning spiritual things peculiar to the saints, which is spoken of, 1 John iii. 6. *Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither know him*, 3 John 2. *He that doeth evil hath not seen God.* And John vi. 40. *This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the son, and believeth on him may have everlasting life.* Chap. xiv. 19. *The world seeth me no more, but ye see me.*

* Chamber's Dictionary, Art. Sense. †Essays p. 67.

Chap. xvii 3. *This is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Matt. xi. 27. *No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* John xii. 45. *He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.* Psa. ix. 10. *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* Phil. iii. 8. *I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* Verse 10. *That I may know him.* And innumerable other places there are all over the Bible, which show the same. And that there is such a thing as an understanding of divine things, which in its nature and kind is wholly different from all knowledge that natural men have, is evident from this, that there is an understanding of divine things which the scripture calls spiritual understanding; Col. i. 9. *We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* It has already been shown that that which is spiritual, is the ordinary use of the word in the New Testament, is entirely different, in nature and kind, from all which natural men are, or can be the subjects of.

"From hence it may be surely referred, wherein spiritual understanding consists. For if there be in the saints a kind of apprehension or perception, which is, in its nature, perfectly diverse from all that natural men have, or that it is possible they should have, till they have a new nature; it must consist in their having a certain kind of ideas or sensations of mind, which are simply diverse from all that is, or can be, in the minds of natural men. And that is the same thing as to say, that it consists in the sensations of *a new spiritual sense*, which the souls of natural men have not; as is evident by what has been before, once and again observed. But I have already shown what that new spiritual sense is, which the saints have given them in regeneration, and what is the object of it. I have shown that the immediate object of it is the supreme beauty and excellency of the nature of divine things as they are in themselves. And this is agreeable to the scripture: The Apostle very plainly teaches, that the great things discovered by spiritual light, and understood by spiritual

knowledge, is the glory of divine things, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;* together with verse 6. *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ:* and Chap. iii. 18. *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.* And it must needs be so, for, as has been before observed, the scripture often teaches that all true religion summarily consists in the love of divine things. And therefore that kind of understanding of knowledge which is the proper foundation of true religion, must be the knowledge of the *loveliness of divine things.* For doubtless that knowledge which is the proper foundation of love, is the knowledge of loveliness. What that beauty or loveliness of divine things is, which is the proper and immediate object of a spiritual sense of mind, was showed under the last head insisted on, viz. that it is the beauty of their moral perfection. Therefore it is in the view or sense of this, that spiritual understanding does more immediately and primarily consist. And indeed it is plain it can be nothing else; for (as has been shown) there is nothing pertaining to divine things besides the beauty of their moral excellency, and those properties and qualities of divine things which this beauty is the foundation of, but what natural men and devils can see and know, and will know fully and clearly to all eternity.

"From what has been said, therefore, we come necessarily to this conclusion, concerning that wherein spiritual understanding consists; viz. that it consists in *a sense of the heart, of the supreme beauty and sweetness of the holiness or moral perfection of divine things, together with all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion, that depends upon, and flows from such a sense.*

"Spiritual understanding consists primarily in *a sense of heart of that spiritual beauty.* I say, *a sense of heart;* for it is not

speculation merely that is concerned in this kind of understanding; nor can there be a clear distinction made between the two faculties of understanding and will, as acting distinctly and separately, in this matter. When the mind is sensible of the sweet beauty and amiableness of a thing, that implies a sensibleness of sweetness and delight in the presence of the idea of it: and this sensibleness of the amiableness, or delightfulness of beauty, carries in the very nature of it, the sense of the heart; or an effect and impression the soul is the subject of, as a substance possessed of taste, inclination and will.

"There is a distinction to be made between a mere *notional understanding*, wherein the mind only beholds things in the exercise of a speculative faculty; and, *the sense of the heart*, wherein the mind does not only *speculate* and *behold*, but *relishes* and *feels*. That sort of knowledge by which a man has a sensible perception of amiableness and loathsomeness, or of sweetness and nauseousness, is not just the same sort of knowledge with that by which he knows what a triangle is, and what a square is. The one is mere speculative knowledge; the other sensible knowledge; in which more than the mere intellect is concerned; the heart is the proper subject of it, or the soul as a being that not only beholds, but has inclination, and is pleased or displeased. And yet there is the nature of instruction in it; as he that has perceived the sweet taste of honey, knows much more about it, than he who has only looked upon, and felt of it.

"The Apostle seems to make a distinction between mere speculative knowledge of the things of religion, and spiritual knowledge, in calling that *the form of knowledge, and of the truth*; Rom. ii. 20. *Which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law.*" The latter is often represented by relishing, smelling or tasting; 2 Cor. ii. 14. *Now thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge in every place.* Matt. xvi. 23. *Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* Cant. i. 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy*

name is as ointment poured forth ; *therefore do the virgins love thee ;* compared with 1 John ii. 20. *But ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.*

" Spiritual understanding *primarily* consists in this *sense, or taste of the moral beauty of divine things ;* so that no knowledge can be called spiritual, any further than it arises from this, and has this in it. But *secondarily*, it includes *all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion which depends upon, and flows from such a sense.* When the true beauty and amiableness of the holiness, or true moral good that is in divine things, is discovered to the soul, it as it were opens a new world to its view. This shows the glory of all the perfections of God, and of every thing appertaining to the Divine Being : for, as was observed before, the beauty of all arises from God's moral perfection. This shows the glory of all God's works, both of creation and providence : for it is the special glory of them, that God's holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, and goodness, are so manifested in them : and without these moral perfections there would be no glory in that power and skill with which they are wrought. The glorifying of God's moral perfections is the special end of all the works of God's hands. By this sense of the moral beauty of divine things, is understood the sufficiency of Christ as a mediator : for it is only by the discovery of the beauty of the moral perfection of Christ, that the believer is let into the knowledge of the excellency of his person, so as to know any thing more of it than the devils do : and it is only by the knowledge of the excellency of Christ's person, that any know his sufficiency as a mediator ; for the latter depends upon, and arises from the former. It is by seeing the excellency of Christ's person, that the saints are made sensible of the preciousness of his blood, and its sufficiency to atone for sin : for therein consist the preciousness of Christ's blood, that it is the blood of so excellent and amiable a person. And on this depends the meritoriousness of his obedience, and sufficiency and prevalence of his intercession. By this sight of the moral beauty of divine things, is seen the beauty of the way of salvation by Christ : for that consists in the beauty of the moral perfections of God, which wonderfully shines forth in every step of this method of

salvation, from beginning to end. By this is seen the fitness and suitablenes of this way: for this wholly consists in its tendency to deliver us from sin and hell, and to bring us to the happiness which consists in the possession and enjoyment of moral good, in a way sweetly agreeing with God's moral perfections. And in the way's being contrived so as to attain these ends, consists the excellent wisdom of that way. By this is seen the excellency of the word of God: take away all the moral beauty and sweetness in the word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry lifeless, tasteless thing. By this is seen the true foundation of our duty; the worthiness of God to be so esteemed, honoured, loved, submitted to, and served, as he requires of us, and the amiableness of the duties themselves that are required of us. And by this is seen the true evil of sin; for he who sees the beauty of holiness, must necessarily see the hatefulness of sin, its contrary. By this men understand the true glory of heaven, which consists in the beauty and happiness that is in holiness. By this is seen the amiableness and happiness of both saints and angels. He that sees the beauty of holiness, or true moral good, sees the greatest and most important thing in the world, which is the fulness of all things, without which all the world is empty, no better than nothing, yea worse than nothing. Unless this is seen, nothing is seen that is worth the seeing: for there is no other true excellency or beauty. Unless this be understood, nothing is understood that is worthy of the exercise of the noble faculty of understanding. This is the beauty of the godhead, and the divinity of divinity, (if I may so speak,) the good of the infinite fountain of good; without which God himself (if that were possible to be) would be an infinite evil, without which we ourselves had better never have been, and without which there had better have been no being. He, therefore, in effect knows nothing, that knows not this. His knowledge is but the shadow of knowledge, or, as the Apostle calls it, the form of knowledge. Well, therefore, may the scriptures represent those who are destitute of that spiritual sense, by which is perceived the beauty of holiness, as totally blind, deaf, and senseless; yea, dead. And well may regeneration, in which this divine sense is given to the soul by its creator, be represented

as opening the blind eyes, and raising the dead, and bringing a person into a new world. For if what has been said be considered, it will be manifest, that when a person has this sense and knowledge given him, he will view nothing as he did before ; though before he knew all things *after the flesh, yet henceforth he will know them so no more ; and he is become a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new ;* agreeable to 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

"And besides the things that have been already mentioned, there arises from this sense of spiritual beauty, all true experimental knowledge of religion ; which is of itself, as it were a new world of knowledge. He that sees not the beauty of holiness, knows not what one of the graces of God's spirit is ; he is destitute of any idea or conception of all gracious exercises of soul, and all holy comforts and delights, and all effects of saving influences of the spirit of God on the heart : and so is ignorant of the greatest works of God, the most important and glorious effects of his power upon the creature : and also is wholly ignorant of the saints as saints ; he knows not what they are : and in effect is ignorant of the whole spiritual world.

"Things being thus, it plainly appears, that God's implanting that spiritual supernatural sense which has been spoken of, makes a great change in a man. And were it not for the very imperfect degree, in which this sense is commonly given at first, or the small degree of this glorious light that first dawns upon the soul ; the change made by this spiritual opening of the eyes, in conversion, would be much greater, and more remarkable, every way, than if a man who had been born blind, and with only the other four senses, should continue so a long time, and then at once should have the sense of seeing imparted to him, in the midst of the clear light of the sun, discovering a world of visible objects. For though sight be more noble than any of the other external senses ; yet this spiritual sense which has been spoken of, is infinitely more noble than that, or any other principle of discerning that a man naturally has, and the object of this sense infinitely great and more important.

This sort of understanding, or knowledge, is that knowledge of divine things from whence all truly gracious affections do proceed: by which, therefore, all affections are to be tried. Those affections that arise wholly from any other kind of knowledge, or do result from any other kind of apprehensions of mind are vain!" pp. 225—232.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

AN INQUIRY, WHETHER, IF BELIEVING BE A SPIRITUAL ACT OF THE MIND, IT DOES NOT PRESUPPOSE THE SUBJECT OF IT TO BE SPIRITUAL.

My Dear Friend,

Mr. Sandeman, and many of his admirers, If I understand them, consider the mind as passive in believing, and charge those who consider faith as an act of the mind with making it a *work* and so of introducing the doctrine of justification by a work of our own.

Mr. Ecking sometimes writes as if he adopted this principle, for he speaks of a person being "passive in receiving the truth."* In another place, however, he is very explicit to the contrary. "Their notion is absurd," he says, "who, in order to appear more than ordinarily accurate, censure and solemnly condemn the idea of believing being an *act* of the mind. It is acknowledged, indeed, that very unscriptural sentiments have prevailed about *acts of faith*, when they are supposed to arise from some previous principle well disposing the minds of unbelievers toward the gospel. Yet if it be admitted possible for the soul of man to act, (and who will deny that it does?) there is nothing more properly an act of the mind than believing a truth; in which first the mind perceives it; then considers the evidence offered to support it; and finally, gives assent to it. And can this comport with inactivity? We must either say, then, that the soul acts in believing the gospel, or that the soul is an inactive spirit, which is absurd."†

* Essays, p. 73. † Ibid, p. 98.

As Mr. E. in this passage, not only states his opinion, but gives his reasons for it, we must consider this as his fixed principle; and that which he says of the truth being "passively received," as expressive, not of faith, but of spiritual illumination *previously* to it. But if so, what does he mean by opposing a previous principle as necesssary to believing? His acts of faith arise from spiritual illumination, which he also must consider as "well disposing the minds of unbelievers toward the gospel."

If there be any difference between him and those whom he opposes, it would seem to consist, not in the *necessity*, but in the *nature* of a previous change of mind; as whether it be proper to call it a *principle*, and to suppose it to include *life* as well as light. He no more considers the mind as discerning and believing the gospel without a previous change wrought in it by the Spirit of God, than his opponents. Nay, as we have seen, he expressly, and, as he says, "readily acknowledges that we must have a spiritual *principle* before we can discern divine beauties." (p. 67.) But if a spiritual principle be necessary to discern divine beauties, it is necessary to discern and believe the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, for they are one and the same thing.

But the previous change which Mr. E. acknowledges, it will be said, is *by means of the word*. Be it so, yet it cannot be by the word *as spiritually discerned and believed*, for spiritual discernment and belief are supposed to be the effect of it.

Mr. E. says indeed, that "the hinge upon which the inquiry turns is, *what* is that principle, and *how* is it implanted?" But this is mere evasion: for let the principle be *what* it may, and let it be implanted *how* it may, since it is allowed to be necessary "before we can discern divine beauties," and of course before we can actively believe in Christ, the argument is given up.

The principle itself he makes to be "the word passively received:" but as this is supposed to be previously to "the discernment of divine beauties," and to the soul's actively believing in Christ, it cannot of course have been produced by either: and to speak of the word becoming a spiritual principle in us before it is either understood or believed, is going a step beyond his opponents. I have no doubt that the word of God, when it is once un-

derstood and believed, becomes a living principle of evangelical obedience. This I conceive to be the meaning of our Lord, when he told the woman of Samaria, that "whosoever should drink of the water that he should give him, (that is of the gospel,) it should be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life." But for the word to become a principle before it is actively received, or, to use the language of Peter, before we have "purified our souls by obeying it," is that of which I can form no idea, and I suppose neither did Mr. Ecking.

As to the second part of what he calls the hinge of the inquiry, viz. *how* this principle is implanted? he endeavours to illustrate it by a number of examples taken from the *miracles* of Christ, in which the word of Christ certainly did not operate on the mind in a way of motive presented to its consideration; but in a way similar to that of the Creator, when he said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* Such is manifestly the idea conveyed by the words in John v. 25. *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* To such an application of the word I have no objection. That for which I contend is, that there is a change effected in the soul of a sinner, called in scripture "giving him eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand"—"a new heart, and a right spirit"—"a new creation,"—&c. &c.—that this change is antecedent to his actively believing in Christ for salvation; and that it is not effected by motives addressed to the mind in a way of moral suasion, but by the mighty power of God.

Mr. M'Lean allows faith to be a duty, or an act of obedience. But if so, this obedience must be yielded either in a spiritual or in a carnal state. If the former, it is all that on this subject is pleaded for. If the latter, that is the same thing as supposing that the carnal mind, *while such*, is enabled to act spiritually, and that it thereby becomes spiritual.

To this purpose I wrote in my *Appendix*, pp. 204, 205; and what has Mr. M'Lean said in reply? Let him answer for himself. "This is a very unfair state of the question so far as it relates to the opinion of his opponents, for he represents them as maintaining that the Holy Spirit causes the mind *while carnal*, or before it

is spiritually illuminated, to discern and believe spiritual things; and then he sets himself to argue against this contradiction of his own framing, as a thing impossible in its own nature, and as declaring by the Holy Spirit to be so. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Were I to state Mr. F's sentiment thus, 'The Holy Spirit imparts to the mind *while carnal* a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth,' would he not justly complain that I had misrepresented his view, and that he did not mean that the mind could possess any holy susceptibility while it was in a carnal state; but only that the Holy Spirit by the very act of imparting this holy susceptibility and relish for the truth, removed the carnality of the mind. But then this explanation applies equally to the other side of the question; and surely it appears at least as consistent with the nature of things, and as easy to conceive, that the Holy spirit should *in the first instance* communicate the light of truth to a dark carnal mind, and thereby render it spiritual, as that he should prior to that impart to it a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth."*

Now, my friend, I intreat your close attention, and that of the reader, to this part of the subject; for here is the hinge of the present question.

I am accused of framing a contradiction which my opponents do not hold. They do not hold then, it seems, that the Holy Spirit causes the mind *while carnal* to discern and believe spiritual things. Spiritual illumination precedes believing; such an illumination too, as removes carnality from the mind, renders the soul spiritual, and so enables it to discern and believe spiritual things. Where then is the difference between us? Surely it does not consist in my holding with a previous principle as necessary to believing, for they profess to hold what amounts to the same thing. If there be any difference however, it must lie in the nature of that which is communicated, or in the order in which it operates. And, as to the first, seeing it is allowed to remove carnality, and to render the soul spiritual, there can be no material difference on this head. With respect to the second, namely, the *order* of its operations, Mr. M. thinks that the communication of the light of truth to a dark, carnal mind, whereby it is ren-

*Reply, p. 7.

dered spiritual, furnishes an easy and constant view of things. To which I answer, If the carnality of the mind were owing to its darkness, it would be so. But Mr. M. has himself told us a different tale, and that from unquestionable authority. "Our Lord," he says, "asks the Jews, *Why do ye not understand my speech?* and gives this reason for it, *even because ye cannot hear my word;* that is, cannot endure my doctrine." Works, Vol. II. p. 110.

Now, if this be just, (and who can controvert it ?) it is not easy to conceive how light introduced into the mind should be capable of removing carnality. It is easy to conceive of the removal of an effect by the removal of the cause, but not of the removal of a cause by the removal of the effect.

But, whatever difference may remain as to the order of operation, the idea of a *previous* principle is held by Mr. M. as much as by his opponent. Only call it "divine illumination, by which the dark and carnal mind is rendered spiritual," and he believes it.

In endeavouring to show the unfairness of the contradiction which I alleged against him, Mr. M. loses himself and his reader, by representing it as made to *the act of the Holy Spirit* in imparting spiritual light to the soul while carnal, whereas that which I alleged against him respected *the act of the creature* in discerning and believing spiritual things while such. If God's communicating either light or holiness to a dark and carnal mind be a contradiction, it is of Mr. M's framing, and not mine: but I see no contradiction in it, so that it be in the natural order of things, any more than in his "quickening us when we were dead in trespasses and sins," which phraseology certainly does not denote that we are dead and alive at the same time! The *contradiction* alleged consisted in *the carnal mind's being supposed to act spiritually*, and not to its being *acted upon* by divine influence, let that influence be what it might. It would be no contradiction to say of Tabitha, that life was imparted to her *while dead:* but it would be contradiction to affirm that while she was dead God caused her to open her eyes, and to look upon Peter!

Mr. M'Lean has, I allow, cleared himself of this contradiction, by admitting the sinner to be made spiritual through divine illu-

mination, *previously* to his believing in Christ; but then it is at the expense of the grand article in dispute, which he has thereby given up; maintaining, as much as his opponent, the idea of a previous principle, or of the soul's being rendered spiritual antecedently to its believing in Christ.

The principal ground on which Mr. M'Lean, Mr. Ecking, and all the writers on that side the question, rests their cause is, the use of such language as the following: *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible*, BY THE WORD OF GOD, *which liveth and abideth for ever.—Of his own will begat he us*, WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH.—*I have begotten you* THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

On this phraseology, I shall submit to you and the reader two or three observations:—

First: A being *begotten*, or *born again by the word*, does not necessarily signify a being regenerated by *faith* in the word. Faith itself is ascribed to the word as well as regeneration: for *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God:* but if we say faith cometh by the word *believed*, that is the same as saying that it cometh by itself. Mr. M. has no idea of the word having any influence but as it is believed:* yet he tells us that faith is "the *effect* of the regenerating influence of the Spirit and word of God."† But if faith be the effect of the word *believed*, it must be the effect of itself. The truth is, the word may operate as an inducement to believe, as well as a stimulus to a new life when it is believed.

Secondly: The terms, *regeneration*, *begotten*, *born again*, &c. are not always used in the same extent of meaning. They sometimes denote the whole of that change which denominates us Christians, and which of course includes repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and in this sense the foregoing passages are easily understood. But the question is, whether regeneration, or those terms by which it is expressed in the scriptures, such as being begotten, born again, quickened, &c. be not sometimes used in the strictest sense. Mr. M. confining what I had said on the *subject* of regeneration as expressed by being *begotten*, *born again*, &c. to the *term* itself, is "confident it bears no such

* Reply, pp. 16—34. † Ibid p. 113.

meaning in the sacred writings." (p. 17.) But if a being born again, which is expressive of regeneration, be sometimes used to *account for faith*, as a cause for its effect, that is all which the argument requires to be established. If it be necessary to be born again in order to believing, we cannot in this sense, unless the effect could be the means of producing the cause, be born again *by* believing. Whether this be the case, let the following passages determine.

John i. 11—13.—*He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God*, EVEN *to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* I can conceive of no reason why the new birth is here introduced but to *account* for some receiving Christ, or believing on his name, while others received him not. Calvin appears to have ordinarily considered regeneration in the *large sense* as stated above and therefore speaks of it as an effect of faith. Yet, when commenting on this passage, perceiving that it is here introduced *to account for faith*, he writes thus: "Hereupon it followeth, first, that faith proceedeth not from us, but that it is a fruit of spiritual regeneration; for the evangelist saith (in effect) that no man can believe unless he be begotten of God; therefore faith is an heavenly gift. Secondly: That faith is not a cold and bare knowledge: seeing none can believe but that he is fashioned again by the Spirit of God. Notwithstanding, it seemeth that the Evangelist dealeth *disorderly* in putting regeneration before faith, seeing that it is rather an *effect* of faith, and therefore to be set after it." To this objection he answers, that "both may very well agree," and goes on to expound the subject of regeneration as sometimes denoting the producing of faith itself, and sometimes of a new life *by* faith.

John iii. 3.—*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* On this passage, Dr. Campbell, in his notes, is very particular, proving that by the kingdom or reign of God, is meant that Messiah in this world; and that ου δυναται (*cannot*) denotes the incapacity of the unregenerate to discern and believe the gospel. The import of this passage is, in his apprehension,

this—"The man who is not regenerated, or born again of water and Spirit, is not in a capacity of perceiving the reign of God, though it were commenced. Though the kingdom of the saints on the earth were already established, the unregenerate would not discern it, because it is a spiritual, not a worldly kingdom, and capable of being no otherwise than spiritually discerned. And, as the kingdom itself would remain unknown to him, he could not share in the blessings enjoyed by the subjects of it.—The same sentiment occurs in 1 Cor. ii. 14."

1 Cor. ii. 14.—*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spritually discerned.* Mr. M. in his *Discourses on the Parable of the Sower,* says, "It is a doctrine clearly taught in the scriptures, that none have a true understanding of the gospel but such as are taught of God by the special illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit. We are expressly told that *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* And in answering an objector, who asks, "What particular truth or sentiment is communicated to the mind by the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit, and which unenlightened men can have no idea of?" Mr. M. says "It is not pleaded that any truth or sentiment is communicated to the mind by the Spirit *besides what is already clearly revealed in the word;* and the illumination of the Spirit IS TO MAKE MEN PERCEIVE AND UNDERSTAND THAT REVELATION WHICH IS ALREADY GIVEN IN ITS TRUE LIGHT."*

Mr. M.'s object through this whole paragraph, seems to be to prove that the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit *is necessary in order to our understanding the scriptures;* but if so, it cannot be *by* the scriptures as understood that we are thus illuminated, for this were a contradiction. It cannot be by any particular truth or sentiment, revealed any more than unrevealed, that we possess "eyes to see, ears to hear, or a heart to understand" it. If the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit consisted in imparting any

* Sermons, pp. 73. 80, 81.

particular truth or sentiment to the mind, even that which is revealed in the scriptures, where would be the *mystery* of the operation? Instead of being compared to the operations of the wind, of which *we know nothing but by its effects*,* it might have been ranked among the operations of motives as suggested by man to man, or at least, as put into the mind by the providence of God so ordering it that such thoughts should strike and influence the mind at the time.† But this would not answer to the scriptural accounts of our being quickened who were dead in sins, by the *power* of God; even by the *exceeding greatness of his power, according to that which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.*

Mr. M. has taken great pains to show the absurdity of my reasoning on this subject; yet the sum of it is this, *That which is necessary in order to understanding and believing the word, cannot be by means of understanding and believing it.*

All true knowledge of divine things is, no doubt to be ascribed to the word as the objective cause, the same way as corporeal perception is ascribed to light. We cannot see without light; neither can we understand or believe spiritual things but by the word of God. But the question does not relate to what is objective, but subjective; or, if I might speak in reference to what is corporeal, not to light, but discernment. Mr. Ecking speaks of light shining into a dark room, and of the absurdity of supposing there must be some principles of light in this room which disposed it to receive that which shone into it. (p. 68.) But if by the light he mean the gospel, he should rather have compared it to light shining upon a blind man, and have shown the absurdity, if he could, of supposing it necessary for his eyes to be opened ere he could discern or enjoy it. There is nothing in a dark room to resist the light, but that is not the case with the dark soul of a sinner. *The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth* (or, as Campbell renders it, *admitteth*) *it not.*

* Such is the meaning of John iii. 8. according to Campbell, and all other expositors that I have seen.

† Ezra vii. 27.

Though I cannot think with Mr. E. that the word of God becomes a spiritual principle in us till it is actively received, yet I allow that it is productive of great effects. The understanding and conscience being enlightened by it, many open sins are forsaken. and many things done in a way of what is called religious duty, And though I have no notion of directing sinners to a course of previous humiliation, nor opinion of the efforts of man toward preparing himself for the reception of divine grace; yet I believe God ordinarily os deals with men as gradually to beat down their false confidences, and reduce them to extremity ere they are brought to embrace the gospel. Such things are not necessarily connected with faith or salvation. In many instances they have their issue in mere self righteous hope: and where it is otherwise, they are to faith and salvation, as I have said before, but as the *noise*, and the shaking of the dry bones, to the *breath of life*.

Moreover, the word of Godp roduces still greater and betterefects *when it is believed*. In them that believe "it worketh effectually." When the commandment comes to a soul in its spirituality, it gives him to percieve the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and when the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, it produces mighty effects. It is the power of God unto salvation *to every one that believeth*. It operated before, to the "pulling down of strong holds," and the casting down of many a vain "imagination;" but now it "bringeth every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ." It is thus that we "know the truth, and the truth (as known) makes us free." If once we are enabled to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, it changes us into the same image, begets and excites holy affections, and produces every kind of gracious exercise.

The gospel is the mould in which the mind of the believer is cast, and by which it is formed. The statement of Dr. Owen, as quoted by Mr. Ecking is very just and scriptural. "As the word is in the gospel, so is grace in the heart; yea, they are the same things variously expressed. Rom. vi. 17. As our translation doth not, so I know not how, in so few words to express that which is so emphatically here insinuated by the Holy Spirit. The meaning is, that the doctrine of the gospel begets the *form*, *figure*, *im-*

age, or *likeness* of itself in the hearts of them that believe: so they are cast into the *mould* of it. As is the one, so is the other. The principle of grace in the heart, and that in the word, are as children of the same parent, completely resembling and representing one another. Grace is a living word, and the word is a figured limned grace. As we have heard, so have we seen and found it: such a soul can produce the duplicate of the word, and so adjust all things thereby," &c.*

All this describes the effect of the word on those *who believe it:* but the question is, how we come to believe it? Dr. Owen has elsewhere attempted to solve this difficulty, by proving that a principle of spiritual life is communicated to the sinner in regeneration, antecedently to believing.† He doubtless considered these things as consistent with each other; and though Mr. Ecking, in making the quotation, appears to consider them as contradictory, yet while he admits that "we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern beauties," the same contradiction, if such it be, attaches to himself.

I allow, with Dr. Owen, that the Spirit of God makes use of "the reasons, motives, and persuasive arguments which the word affords, to affect the mind; and that converted persons are able to give some account of the considerations whereby they were prevailed upon." But I also think, with him, that "the *whole* work of the Spirit in our conversion does not consist herein; but that there is a real physical work whereby he imparts spiritual life to the souls of all who are truly regenerated."‡

Mr. M'Lean rejects the idea of *physical influence*, and seems to confound it with something corporeal, or mechanical.§ If I understand the term *physical*, with respect to influence, it is opposed to moral. That influence is denominated moral that works upon the mind by motives, or considerations which induce it to this or that; and all beyond this is physical and supernatural. When

* On Psalm 130, pp. 168—170: in Ecking's Essays, pp. 77—79.

† Discourses on the Holy Spirit, Book III. Chap. 1.

‡ Ibid. Chap 5. Sect. 18. §Works, p. 84

God created the soul of man, originally, in righteousness and true holiness, I suppose it must be allowed to have been a physical work. Man certainly was not induced by motives to be righteous any more than to be rational: yet there was nothing corporeal or mechanical in it. It is thus that I understand Dr. Owen, in the passage just quoted, in which, while he admits of the use of moral suasion, he denies that the *whole* work of conversion consists in it; and I should think Mr. M. could not, even upon his own principles, maintain the contrary. For whatever motives or considerations the word of God may furnish in a way of moral suasion, yet he holds with the necessity of a divine supernatural influence being superadded to it, by which the mind is illuminated and rendered spiritual. But, if divine influence consists in any thing distinct from the influence of the word, it must be supernatural and physical. The party is also equally unconscious of it on his principles as on mine: he is conscious of nothing but its effects. He finds himself the subject of new views and sensations; but as to knowing whence they came, it is likely he thinks nothing of it at the time, and is ready to imagine that any person, if he would but look into the Bible, must see what he sees so plainly taught in it. He may be conscious of ideas suggested to him by the word, and of their effect upon his mind; but as to any divine influence accompanying them, he knows nothing of it.

Mr. Ecking represents "the inability, or spiritual death of sinners as *consisting in disinclination*, or loving darkness rather than light." And this disinclination he ascribes to *ignorance* and *unbelief;* from whence he argues, "If the removal of the effect is by removing the cause, it is reasonable to suppose that this is the way in which God works upon the human mind." (p. 66.) That the removal of the effect is by the removal of the cause, I allow; but what authority had Mr. E. for making ignorance and unbelief the cause of spiritual death. Spiritual death *consists* in ignorance and unbelief, no less than in disinclination. It consists in *sin;** and if ignorance and unbelief are sins, they are of the essence of spiritual death. It is true they are productive of other sins, and may

* Ephes. ii. 1.

be considered as growing near to the root of moral evil: but, unless a thing can be the cause of itself, they are not the cause of *all* evil. Before we ascribe spiritual death to ignorance, it is necessary to inquire whether this ignorance be voluntary, or involuntary? If *involuntary*, it is in itself sinless; and to represent this as the cause of depravity is to join with Godwin, in explaining away all innate principles of evil, and, indeed, all moral evil and accountableness from among men. If *voluntary*, the solution does not reach the bottom of the subject; for the question still returns, what is the cause of voluntariness of ignorance, or of the sinner's *loving* darkness rather than light? Is this also to be ascribed to ignorance? If so, the same consequence follows as before, that there is no such thing as moral evil or accountableness among men.

Mr. M'Lean has stated this subject much clearer than Mr. Ecking. He may elsewhere have written in a different strain, but in the last edition of his *Dissertation on the Influences of the Holy Spirit*, he attributes ignorance and unbelief to hatred, and not hatred to ignorance and unbelief. "Our Lord," he says, "asks the Jews, *Why do ye not understand my speech?* And gives this reason for it, *even because ye cannot hear my word*—that is, cannot endure my doctrine. Their love of worldly honour, and the applause of men is given as a reason why they could not believe in him. John v. 44. He traces their unbelief into their HATRED both of him and his Father. John xv. 22. 24."*

Nothing is more evident than that the cause of spiritual blindness is, in the scriptures, ascribed to disposition. *Light is come into the world; but men* LOVE DARKNESS *rather than light, because their deeds are evil.—They say unto God, depart from us, for we* DESIRE NOT *the knowledge of thy ways.—Being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them,* BECAUSE OF THE BLINDNESS (hardness, or callousness,) OF THEIR HEART.—*Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.* But if, as the scriptures teach, the cause of both ignorance and unbelief is to be traced to *hatred*, (as Mr. M'Lean acknowledges;) and if, as Mr. Ecking says, "effects are removed by the

* Works, Vol. II. p. 110.

removal of the cause," I scarcely need to draw the consequence—that though in a general sense it be true that we are regenerated *by* believing the gospel, yet in a more particular sense it is equally true that we are regenerated *in order to it*.

It is somewhat extraordinary that Mr. M'Lean, after allowing pride and aversion to be the great obstructions to faith, should yet deny the removal of them to be necessary to it. He will allow some sort of conviction of sin to be necessary to believing in Christ; but nothing that includes the removal of enmity, of pride, for this were equal to allowing repentance to be necessary to it: but if enmity and pride be not removed, how can the sinner, according to our Lord's reasoning in John viii. 43. v. 44, understand or believe the gospel? If there be any meaning in words, it is supposed by this language, that, in order to understand and believe the gospel, it is necessary to "endure" the doctrine, and to feel a regard to "the honour that cometh from God." To account for the removal of pride and enmity as *bars to believing*, *by means of believing*, is, I say, very extraordinary, and as inconsistent with Mr. M.'s own concessions as it is with scripture and reason: for, when writing on spiritual illumination, he allows the dark and carnal mind to be thereby rendered spiritual, and so enabled to discern and believe spiritual things.*

I am yours, &c.

* Reply, p. 7.

LETTER VIII.

AN INQUIRY WHETHER THE PRINCIPLES HERE DEFENDED AFFECT THE DOCTRINE OF FREE JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

My dear Friend,

You are aware that this subject has frequently occurred in the foregoing letters; but, being of the first importance, I wish to appropriate one letter wholly to it. If any thing I have advanced be inconsistent with justification by faith alone, in opposition to justification by the works of the law, I am not aware of it; and on conviction that it is so, should feel it my duty to retract it. I know Mr. M'Lean has laboured hard to substantiate this charge against me; but I know also that it belongs to the adherents of the system to claim the exclusive possession of this doctrine, and to charge others with error concerning it, on very insufficient grounds.* You may remember, perhaps, that Dr. Gill was accu-

* I do not mean to suggest that Mr. M'Lean's *system* is precisely that of Mr. Sandeman. The former, in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel*, has certainly departed from it in many things, particularly in respect of the sinner's being justified antecedently to any "act, exercise, or advance" of his mind towards Christ; and on which account Mr. S. would have set him down among the *popular preachers*.† But he has so much of the system of Mr. S. still in his mind, as often to reason upon the ground of it, and to involve himself in numerous inconsistencies.

† See Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. II. p. 481, Note.

sed of self-righteousness, by M. Sandeman, on the ground of his being an anti-pædobaptist!

A large part of that which Mr. M'Lean has written on this subject, is what I never meant to oppose; much of what he imputes to me is without foundation; and even where my sentiments are introduced, they are generally in caricature.

I have no doubt of the character which a sinner sustains antecedently to his justification, both in the account of the Lawgiver of the world, and in his own account, being that of the *ungodly*. I have no objection to Mr. M's own statement, that God may as properly be said to justify the ungodly as to pardon the guilty. If the sinner at the instant of justification be allowed *not to be at enmity with God*, that is all I contend for, and that is in effect allowed by Mr. M. He acknowledges that the Apostle "does not use the word *ungodly* to describe the *existing character* of an actual believer."* But if so, as no man is justified till he is an actual believer, no man is justified in enmity to God. He also considers faith, justification, and sanctification as coeval, and allows that no believer *is* in a state of enmity to God.† It follows, that as no man is justified till he believes in Jesus, no man is justified till he ceases to be God's enemy. If this be granted, all is granted for which I contend.

If there be any meaning in words, Mr. Sandeman considered the term *ungodly* as denoting *the existing state of mind* in a believer at the time of his justification; for he professes to have been at enmity with God, or, which is the same thing, not to have "begun to love him," till he was justified, and even perceived that he was so.‡ It was this notion that I wished to oppose, and not any thing relative to the character under which the sinner is justified. Mr. M.'s third question, namely, "Whether justifying faith respects God as the justifier of the ungodly?" was never any question with me. Yet he will have it that I "make the Apostle by the term ungodly to mean godly." He might as well say that when I allow pardon to respect men as guilty, and yet plead for repentance as necessary to it, I make repentance and guilt to be the same thing.

* Reply, p. 123. † Ibid. p. 43. ‡ Epistolary Correspondence, p. 12.

I am not aware of any difference with Mr. M. as to what constitutes a godly *character*. Though faith is necessary to justification, and therefore, in the order of nature, previous to it; yet I have no objection to what he says, that it does not constitute a godly *character*, or *state* previously to justification * And whatever I have written of *repentance* as preceding faith in Christ, or of a *holy* faith as necessary to justification, I do not consider any person as a penitent or holy *character* till he believes in Christ and is justified. The holiness for which I plead antecedent to this is merely incipient; the rising beam of the sanctification of the Spirit. It is no more than the spirituality which Mr. M. considers as produced by divine illumination, previous, or in order to believing;† and all the consequences that he has charged on the one, might with equal justice be charged on the other.

Nor am I aware of any difference in our views respecting *the duties of unbelievers;* if there be any, however, it is not on the side that Mr. M. imagines, but the contrary. Having described the awakened sinner as "convinced of guilt, distressed in his mind on account of it, really concerned about the salvation of his soul, and not only earnestly desiring relief, but diligently labouring to obtain it, according to the directions given him, by the exercise of holy affections and dispositions," he adds, "All this I admit may be previous to faith in Christ, and forgiveness through him. *And will Mr. Fuller deny this is the repentance he pleads for in order to forgiveness?*"‡ MOST CERTAINLY HE WILL. Had this been what he pleaded for, he had been justly chargeable with the consequences which Mr. M'Lean has attempted to load him with. But it is not. I cannot but consider this question as a proof that Mr. M. utterly mistook my sentiments on this part of the subject as much as I did his in another, in consequence of having considered him as the author of a piece called *Simple Truth*. I have no more idea of there being any holiness in the exercises which he has described than he himself has. I might add, *nor quite so much:* for, (notwithstanding what he has here advanced,) in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel*, he does not keep clear of

* Reply, p. 145. † Ibid. p. 7. ‡ Ibid. p. 148.

unregenerate works being somewhat good, or at least that they are not *all* and *altogether* sinful.* If this be compared with what I have written on *total depravity*, in Essays, pp. 53—81, it will be seen who holds, and who holds not, with the holiness of the doings of the unregenerate.

But, whether or not I deny this to be the repentance for which I plead as necessary to forgiveness, Mr. M. plainly intimates that *it is all the repentance which he allows to be so.* In all that he has written therefore, acknowledging repentance to be necessary to forgiveness,† he only means to allow that a few graceless convictions are so: and, in contradiction to the whole current of scripture, even to those scriptures which he has produced and reasoned from in his *Thoughts on the calls of the Gospel*, still believes that sinners are forgiven prior to any repentance but that which needs to be repented of.

The difference between us, as to the subject of this letter, seems chiefly to respect the nature of faith, whether it include any exercise of the will; and if it do, whether it affect the doctrine of free justification.

Mr. M. acknowledges faith, as a principle of sanctification, to be holy: it is only *as justifying* that he is for excluding all holy affection from it.‡ But if it be holy in relation to sanctification, it must be holy *in itself;* and that which is holy in itself, must be so in every relation which it sustains. It is not one kind of faith that sanctifies, and another that justifies; but the same thing in different respects. To represent faith sanctifying as being holy and faith justifying as having no holiness in it, is not viewing the same, but a different thing in different respects.

For a specimen of Mr. M.'s manner of writing on this subject, you will excuse my copying as follows: "An awakened sinner asks, *What must I do to be saved?* An Apostle answers, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* But a preacher of the doctrine I am opposing, would have taught him another lesson. He might, indeed, in compliance, with scripture language, use the word *believe;* but he would tell him that, in this case, it did

* See Vol. II, of his Works, pp. 63, 64. † Reply, pp. 36—42 ‡ Ibid. p. 97.

not bear its usual sense, that it was not the assent of his understanding, in giving credit to the testimony of the gospel, by a *grace* arising from a *previous* spiritual principle, and including in it a number of *holy affections* and *dispositions* of heart, all of which he must exercise and set a working, in order to his being justified; and many directions will be given him how he is to perform this. But this is to destroy the freedom of the gospel, and to make the hope of a sinner turn upon his finding some virtuous exercises and dispositions in his own heart, instead of placing it directly in the work finished by the son of God upon the cross. In opposition to this, I maintain that whatever virtue or holiness may be supposed in the nature of faith itself, as it is not the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God, so neither does it enter into the consideration of the person who is really believing unto righteousness. He views himself, not as exercising virtue, but only as a mere sinner, while he believes on him that justifieth the ungodly, through the atonement." pp. 98, 99.

You will not expect me to answer this. It is a proof how far a writer may misunderstand, and so misrepresent his opponent; and even in those things wherein he understands him, describe him in caricature. I will only apply a few of the leading traits in this picture, to Mr. M.'s own principles. 'A preacher of this doctrine, instead of directing a sinner to believe in Christ, and there leaving it, would tell him that faith was an assent of his *understanding*, a grace arising from a previous *divine illumination*, by which he becomes spiritual, and which he must needs therefore first be possessed of, and thus set him a working in order to get it, that he may be justified. But this is to deny the freeness of the gospel, and to make the hope of a sinner turn upon his finding some *light within* him, instead of placing it upon the finished work of the Son of God upon the cross. In opposition to this, I maintain that whatever illumination may be supposed necessary to believing, and whatever spiritual perception is contained in the nature of it, as it is not the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God, so neither does it enter into the consideration of the person who is really believing unto rightoeusness. He views himself not as di-

vinely illuminated, but merely as a sinner, believing in him who justifieth the ungodly through the righteousness of his Son.'

Mr. M. when writing in this strain, knew that I had said nearly the same things; and, therefore, that if he were opposing me, I had first opposed myself. He even quotes almost a page of my acknowledgments on the subject.* But these are things, it seems, which I only "sometimes seem to hold." Well, if Mr. M. can prove that I have *any where*, either in the piece he was answering, or in any other, directed the sinner's attention to the workings of his own mind, instead of Christ, or have set him a *working*, (unless he please to give that name to an exhortation to forsake his way, and return to God, through Jesus Christ,) or have given him any directions how to work himself into a believing frame; then let all that he has said stand against me. But if not, let me be believed when I declare my utter disapprobation of every thing of the kind.

But Mr. M. has another charge, or rather *suspicion* against me. "Mr. Fuller admits," he says, "that faith does not justify, either as an *internal* or *external work*, or *holy exercise*, or as being *any part* of that which is imputed unto us for righteousness; and did not other parts of his writings appear to clash with this,—I should rest satisfied. But I own that I am not without a suspicion that Mr. F. here only means that faith does not justify *as the procuring cause or meritorious ground* of a sinner's justification; and that while we hold this point, we may include as much virtue and holy exercise of the will and affections as we please, without affecting the point of justification, as that stands entirely upon another ground, viz. the righteousness of Christ. But it must be carefully observed, that the difference between us *does not respect the meritorious procuring* cause of justification, but the *way* in which we receive it."†

Be it according to this statement, (and I have no objection to say that such is the whole of my meaning,) yet what is there in this that clashes with the above acknowledgments, or with free justification? There may be a "difference between us" which yet may not affect this doctrine. But let us hear him through.

* Reply, p. 100. † Ibid.

"The scriptures abundantly testify that we are *justified by faith*, which shows that faith has some concern in this matter." True. "And Mr. Fuller admits that justification is ascribed to faith, merely as that which *unites us to Christ*, for the sake of whose righteousness alone, we are accepted." Very good. "Therefore, the only question between us is this. Does faith unite us to Christ, and so receive justification through his righteousness, *merely in crediting* the divine testimony respecting the sufficiency of that righteousness alone to justify us; or does it unite us to Christ, and obtain justification through his righteousness, by virtue of its being a *moral excellency*, and as including the *holy exercise* of the will and affections? The former is my view of this matter; the latter, if I am not greatly mistaken, is Mr. Fuller's." p. 101.

It is some satisfaction to find our differences on the important doctrine of justification reduced to a single point. Allowing my sentiments to be fairly stated, (and though I should not express them just in these words, yet I certainly do consider a holy faith as necessary to unite us to a holy Saviour,) the question is, whether this sentiment clashes with the foregoing acknowledgments, or with the doctrine of free justification? It lies on Mr. M. to *prove* that it does so. Let us hear him "I hold that sinners are justified through Christ's righteousness, *by faith alone*, or purely in believing that the righteousness of Christ, which he finished on the cross, and which was declared to be accepted by his resurrection from the dead, is alone sufficient for their pardon and acceptance with God, however guilty and unworthy they are. But, in opposition to this, the whole strain of Mr Fuller's reasoning, tends to show that sinners are not justified by faith *alone*, but by faith working by love, or including in it the holy exercise of the will and affections; and this addition to faith he makes to be that qualification in it, on which the fitness or congruity of an interest in Christ's righteousness depends. (App. pp. 183, 184.) Without this addition, he considers faith itself, whatever be its grounds or object, to be an empty, unholy speculation, which requires no influence of the Spirit to produce it. (p. 128.) So that if what is properly termed *faith*, has in his opinion any place at all in justifi-

cation, it must be merely on account of the holy exercises and affections which attend it." pp. 101, 102.

Such is Mr. M.'s *proof* of my consistency with my own acknowledgments, and with the freeness of justification.

Let it be remembered, in the first place, that the difference between us, by Mr. M.'s own acknowledgment, does not respect the *meritorious*, or *procuring cause* of justification. All he says, therefore, of "the righteousness of Christ as finished, and declared to be accepted by his resurrection from the dead, being alone sufficient for our pardon and acceptance with God, however guilty and unworthy we are," belongs equally to my views, as to his own: yet, immediately after these words, he says, "but in *opposition* to this, Mr. F." &c. as if these sentiments were exclusively his own. The difference between us belongs to the nature of justifying faith. He considers the sinner as united to Christ, and so as justified, by the mere assent of his understanding to the doctrine of the cross, *exclusive of all approbation of it:* whereas I consider every thing pertaining to the understanding, when the term is used exclusive of approbation, to be either merely natural, or a "seeing and hating of Christ the Father." Nor is approbation a mere effect of faith, but enters into its essence. It is believing, but it is believing with the heart; which all the labors of Mr. Sandeman and his disciples have not been able to prove means only the understanding. We may believe many things without approving them: but the nature of the objects believed in this case, renders cordiality essential to it. It is impossible, in the nature of things, to believe the gospel without a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the suitableness and glory of the Saviour, which does not merely, *produce* but *includes* approbation of him. To "see no form nor comeliness in him" is the same thing as to be an unbeliever; and the contrary is to be a believer.

But I shall notice these remarks of Mr. M. a little more particularly.

First: By the manner in which he has introduced them, it must appear to the reader that I had not fully declared my mind on this subject, and that Mr. M. in detecting my errors was obliged to proceed on the uncertain ground of "suspicion:" yet he could not have

read the very pages on which he was animadverting,* without having repeatedly met with the most express avowals of the sentiment, such as the following—"Whatever is pleaded in behalf of the holy nature of faith, it is not supposed to justify us as, *a work* or *holy exercise*, or as being *any part of that which is accounted unto us for righteousness:* but merely as that which UNITES TO CHRIST, for the sake of whose righteousness alone we are accepted."—Again: "Living faith, or faith that worketh by love, is necessary to justification, not as being the ground of our acceptance with God; not as a virtue of which justification is the reward; but as that without which *we could not be* UNITED TO A LIVING REDEEMER." Yet with these passages before his eyes, Mr. M. affects to be at a loss to know my sentiments; he "suspects" I maintain holy affection in faith as necessary to union with Christ!

Secondly: If the difference between us has no respect to the *meritorious, or procuring cause of justification*, as Mr. M. allows it has not, then why does he elsewhere tell his reader that "he thinks Mr. F. means to plead for such a *moral fitness* for justification as that wherein the virtue of the party commends him to it; or in which he is put into a good state as a fit or suitable testimony of regard to the moral excellency of his qualifications or acts." (p. 104.) I know not what Mr. M. may think, but I should consider this as making faith the *procuring cause*, or *meritorious ground* of justification: for what is the meritorious ground of a blessing but that in consideration of which it is bestowed?

Thirdly: If it is not sufficient that we ascribe the meritorious, or procuring cause of justification to the work of Christ, unless we also exclude all holy affection from the nature of faith as uniting us to him, how is it that Mr. M. has written as he has on the *Calls of the Gospel?* He seems to have thought it quite enough for *him* to disavow repentance or faith as making any part of our justifying righteousness, though the same disavowal on *my* part gives him no satisfaction. "Did Peter," he asks, "overturn the doctrine of free justification by faith when he exhorted the unbeliving Jews to repent and be converted that their sins might be blotted out?

* Appendix, pp. 182—184.

Does he there direct them to any *any part of that work which Christ had finished for the justification of the ungodly*, or lead them to think that their faith, repentance, or conversion were to *make an atonement for their sins?*" Again: "Cannot the wicked be exhorted to believe, repent, and seek the Lord, and be encouraged to this by a promise of success, without making the success to depend on *human merit?* Are such exhortations and promises always to be suspected of having a dangerous and self righteous tendency? Instead of taking them in their plain and simple sense, must our main care always be to guard against some supposed self-righteous use of them, till we have explained away their whole force and spirit, and so distinguished and refined upon them as to make men more afraid to comply with, than to reject them, lest they should be *guilty of some exertion of mind or body, some good disposition or motion towards Christ, which is supposed to be the highest wickedness, and a despising of the work of Christ*?"*.

If there be any meaning in words, Mr. M. here most decidedly contends for repentance, faith, and conversion (which must be allowed to include holy affection) being necessary in the established order of things, to mercy, pardon, &c. which must also be allowed to include justification.

Fourthly: With respect to *fitness*, I think, with Mr. M. that there is a "peculiar suitableness in faith to receive justification, and every other spiritual blessing purely of grace." (p. 106.) *It is of faith that it might of grace.* And this peculiar suitableness consists in its being of the nature of faith to receive the blessings of grace as God's free gifts through the atonement, instead of performing any thing in the way of being rewarded for it. Thus it is properly opposed to the works of the law. But it does not follow that in order to this there must be no "good disposition or motion towards Christ" in our believing in him. On the contrary, if faith were mere knowledge, exclusive of approbation, it would not be adapted to receive the doctrine of the gospel; it would be either unholy, or at best merely natural. If the former instead of receiving, it would be

* See Works, Vol. II. pp. 38. 55, 56.

certain to reject the heavenly doctrine; and if the latter, there would be no more suitableness to receive it, than there is in the wisdom of this world to receive the true knowledge of God. A holy faith is necessary to receive a holy doctrine, and so to unite us to a holy Saviour.

The *fitness* for which I plead, in God's justifying those who cordially acquiesce in the gospel way of salvation, rather than others, and which Mr. M. considers as inconsistent with free justification, (*Reply*, p. 183.) is no other than the fitness of wisdom, which, while it preserves the honours of grace, is not inattentive to those of righteousness. Had it been said, Though the wicked forsake *not* his way, *nor* the unrighteous man his thoughts; and though he return *not* to the Lord, yet will he have mercy upon him, *nor* to our God, yet will he abundantly pardon—we should feel a want of fitness, and instantly perceive that grace was here exalted at the expense of righteousness. He that can discern no fitness in such connexions but that of *works and rewards*, must have yet to learn some of the first principles of the oracles of God.

Fifthly: With respect to justification *by faith alone*, Mr. M. appears to have affixed a new sense to the phrase. I have always understood it to mean justification by a righteousness *received*, in opposition to justification by a righteousness *performed*, according to Gal. iii. 11, 12. *That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but* THE MAN THAT DOETH THEM *shall live in them.* In this sense, justification by *faith alone* applies to my views of the subject as well as to his; but the sense in which he uses the phrase is very nearly akin to that in which James uses it when speaking of faith as *dead, being alone.* We are, indeed, justified by *faith alone;* but not by faith *which is alone.*

Mr. M. is in the habit of speaking of that holiness which I conceive essential to the nature of faith as something "added" to it, or as being something "more" than faith: but he might as well say that a cordial rejection of the gospel is something "more" than unbelief. In like manner he seems to consider the phrase *faith which worketh by love* as expressive of what faith *produces posterior to its uniting us to Christ;* whereas it is of the nature of faith in its very *first* existence in the mind to work, and that in a way of love

to the object. It is also remarkable, that Paul speaks of faith which *worketh by love* as availing to justification; while circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing.* Faith, hope, and charity have, no doubt, their distinctive characters; but not one of them, nor of any other grace, consists in its being devoid of holy affection. This is a common property belonging to all the graces, is coeval with them, and essential to them. Whatever we may possess, call it knowledge or faith, or what we may, if it be devoid of this, it is not the effect of special divine influence, and therefore not a fruit of the Spirit. *That which is born of the Spirit*, IS SPIRIT.

Lastly: If union with Christ were antecedent to all holy affection, it would not be what the scriptures represent it; namely, an union of spirit: *He that is joined to the Lord is* ONE SPIRIT.† Union of Spirit must include congeniality of disposition. Our heart must be as Christ's heart, or we are not one with him. Believing in him with all the heart, we from hence, according to the wise and gracious constitution of the gosspel, and not in reward of any holiness in us, possess a revealed interest in him, and in all the benefits arising from his obedience unto death. *He that hath the Son hath life*, Such appears to be the order of things as taught us in the scripture, and such the connexion between faith and justification. If union with Christ were *acquired* by faith, and an interest in him were bestowed in *reward* of it, it would indeed be inconsistant with free justification: but if the necessity of a holy faith arise merely from the nature of things; that is, its fitness to unite us to a holy Saviour; and if faith itself be the gift of God, no such consequence follows; for the union, though we be active in it, is in reality formed by him who actuates us, and to him belongs the praise. OF HIM *are ye* IN *Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written* HE THAT GLORIETH, LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD.‡

Mr. M. has written much about God's justifying the *ungodly*: but while he allows that the term is not descriptive of the existing character of a believer, I have no dispute with him. He admits that

* Gal. v. 6. † 1 Cor. vi. 17. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

when Christ is said to *die for the ungodly*, the term includes many who *at the time were saints*, only he died not for them *as saints;* (p. 115.) and this I readily allow. The examples of Abraham and David were not introduced by me to prove them to have been godly characters for many years prior to their justification; but that the examples of their faith being taken not from their first believing, while yet it respected God as the justifier of the ungodly, the doctrine of free justification could not require that the party should at the time be at enmity with God.*

Mr. M. has also written much about the state of *an awakened sinner*. As he had disowned the subject of any *holy affection*, I concluded he must be "an hardhearted enemy of God." This was stated, not from a want of feeling toward any poor sinner, but to show whither the principle led. Mr. M. answers—"I have not the least idea that a hardhearted enemy of God, while such, *can* either receive or enjoy forgiveness; but I distinguish between such a state of mind, and that of an awakened self-condemned sinner, and also between the latter and a real convert who believes the gospel, has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and is possessed of holy affections." (p. 151.) Is there a medium, then, between holy affection and hardhearted enmity? If so, it must be something like neutrality. But Christ has left no room for this, having declared, *He that is not with me is against me*. Let a sinner be alarmed as much as he may, if he have no holy affection toward God, he must be a hardhearted enemy to him. Such I believe are many awakened sinners notwithstanding all their terrors, and such they will view themselves to have been, if they ever come to see things as they are. There are others, however who are not so, but whose convictions are spiritual, like those of Paul, who saw *sin, through the commandment, to be exceeding sinful*, and who *through the law became dead to the law, that he might live unto God.*" Convictions of this kind lead the sinner to Christ. They may not be distinguishable at the time, either by himself or others, and nothing but the *effects* may prove the difference: yet an essential difference there is.

* On this subject I beg leave to refer the reader to Discourse XXII of my work on Genesis.

Mr. M. refers to the case of the jailor. I know not what was his conviction of the evil of sin nor when he became the subject of holy affection. But be it when it might, he was till then an hardhearted enemy of God. The case to which writers on Mr. M.'s side the question more frequently refer is, that of the self-condemned publican; but antecedently to his going down to his house justified, "humbled himself," and that in a way of *holy*, though not of *joyful* affection.

According to Mr. M. there is a state of mind which is not the effect of renewing grace and therefore contains nothing truly good; but which is nevertheless, *necessary* and *sufficient* to prepare the sinner for receiving the forgiveness of his sin. 'A hardhearted enemy of God *cannot* receive or enjoy gospel forgiveness; but a sinner under terrors of conscience, though equally destitute of all regard for God as the other, *can*.'

Far be it from me to impeach Mr. M.'s integrity. I doubt not but he thinks that, in writing his *Reply*, he was engaged in refuting error. Yet, if his own words are to be believed, he does not know, after all, but that he has been opposing the truth. In page 151, he says, "Whether such convictions as issue in conversion differ *in kind* from others, I WILL NOT TAKE UPON ME TO DETERMINE." That is, he does not know but that it may be so, and that there is such a thing as spiritual conviction, a conviction of the *evil* of sin antecedently to believing in the Saviour, and subservient to it. But this is the same, in effect, as saying he does not know whether that which he has been opposing throughout his performance may not, after all, be true,! "But I am certain of this," he adds, "that it would be very unsafe to build up any in an opinion of their possessing holiness merely upon the ground of their convictions, while they come short of a real change, and do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That conviction of sin and its desert which is subservient to faith in Christ, will never lead a person to think that it is any part of his holiness; for such a thought would be as opposite to the nature of his conviction as his feeling a disease would be to his thinking himself whole." Very good; but against what is it directed? not any thing advanced by his opponent. It is, however, manifestly against the scope of his

own performance. The tendency, though not the design, of these remarks is, to show that there is a "difference in kind" between some convictions and others, and a marked one too. "That conviction of sin and its desert which is subservient to faith in Christ will never lead a person to think that is any part of his holiness:" but (he might have added) *that* conviction of sin which is not subservient to faith in Christ will. Graceless convictions generally, if not always, become objects of self-admiration. Here then Mr. M. not only determines that *there is a difference* between some convictions and others, but specifies wherein that difference consists. It never occurred to the self-condemned publican that there was any thing good or holy in his "humbling himself" before God. Our Lord, however, held it up as being so, and recommended it as an example to others.

I shall conclude this letter with a few remarks on *qualifications*. This is a term on which Mr. Sandeman and his followers have plentifully declaimed. It conveys to me the idea of something which *entitles* the party to a good, or *fits* him to enjoy it. With respect to entitling us, I suppose there is no dispute. The gospel and its invitations are our title to come to Christ for salvation. And with respect to fitting us, there is nothing of this kind that is pleadable, or which furnishes any ground of encouragement to the sinner that he shall be accepted. It is not any thing prior to coming to Christ, but coming itself that has the promise of acceptance. All that is pleaded for is, the necessity of a state of mind suited in the nature of things to believing, and without which no sinner ever did or can believe; and which state of mind is not self-wrought, but the effect of regenerating grace.

Mr. Sandeman represents sinners as saying to preachers, "If you would preach the gospel to us, you must tell us something fit to give us joy as we presently stand, unconscious of any distinguishing *qualification*." That the mind, at the time when it first receives gospel comfort, may be *unconscious*, not only of every distinguishing qualification, but of being the subject of any thing truly good, I allow; for I believe that is the first true comfort which arises from the consideration of *what Christ is*, rather than of what *we are towards him*. But to be "unconscious" of any

thing truly good, and actually destitute of it, are two things: and so is its being necessary *in the nature of things* to our enjoying the consolations of the gospel, and its being so *as a qualification* entitling, or in some way recommending us to the divine favour. To conceive of a sinner who is actually hardened in his sins, bloated with self-righteous pride, and full of opposition to the gospel, receiving joy "presently as he stands" is not only conceiving of rest for the soul without coming to the Saviour for it, but is in itself a contradiction. Mr. M'Lean acknowledges as much as this. "I have not the least idea," he says "that a hardhearted enemy of God, while such, *can* either receive or enjoy forgiveness." Conviction of sin then, whether it have any thing holy in it, or not, is *necessary*, not, I presume, as a qualification recommending the sinner to the divine favour, but as that without which believing in Jesus were in its own nature impossible. Such are my views as to the necessity of a new heart ere the sinner can come to Christ. The joy that the unregenerate sinner can receive "presently as he stands" is any thing but that which is afforded by the good news of salvation to the chief of sinners.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

ON CERTAIN NEW TESTAMENT PRACTICES.

My dear Friend,

That there are serious Christians who have leaned to the Sandemanian system I have no doubt; and in people of this description I have seen things worthy of imitation. It has appeared to me that there is a greater diligence in endeavouring to understand the scriptures, and a stricter regard to what they are supposed to contain, than among many other professors of Christianity. They do not seem to trifle with either principle or practice in the manner that many do. Even in those things wherein they appear to me to misunderstand the scriptures, there is a regard towards them which is worthy of imitation. There is something even in their rigidness, which I prefer before that trifling with truth which, among other professing Christians often passes under the name of liberality.

These concessions, however, do not respect those who have gone entirely into the system, so as to have thoroughly imbibed its spirit; but persons who have manifested a considerable partiality in favour of the doctrine. Take the denomination as a whole, and it is not among them you can expect to see the Christian practice of the New Testament exemplified. You will find them very punctilious in some things; but very defective in others. Religion, as exhibited by them, resembles a rickety child, whose growth is confined to certain parts: it wants that lovely uniformity, or proportion, which constitutes the beauty of holiness.

Some of the followers of Mr. Sandeman, who, in his life time, formed a society in St. Martin's-le-grand, London, and published an account of what they call their *Christian practices*, acknowledge that the command of washing one another's feet is binding "only when it can be an act of kindness to do so," and that though there be neither precept nor precedent for *family-prayer*, yet "it seems necessary for maintaining the fear of God in a family." They proceed, however, to judge those who insist on family-prayer and the first day sabbath, *while they disregarded the feasts of charity, the holy kiss*, &c. as persons "influenced to their religious practices, not by the fear of God, the authority of Christ, or the Spirit of truth." It is easy to see, from hence, what kind of Christian practice that is by which these people are distinguished.*

A punctilious adherence to the letter of scripture in some cases commendable, even though it may extend to *the tithing of mint and cummin:* but in others it would lead you aside from the mind of Christ; and to pursue any thing to the neglect of *judgment, mercy, and the love of God*, is dangerous in the extreme.

It has long appeared to me, that a great many errors have arisen from applying to *moral obligations*, the principle which is proper in obedience to *positive institutions*. By confounding these, and giving to both the name of *ordinances*, the New Testament becomes little more than ritual, and religion is nearly reduced to a round of mechanical performances.

The distinction of obedience into *moral* and *positive* has been made by the ablest writers of almost every denomination, and must be made if we would understand the scriptures. Without it we should confound the eternal standard of right and wrong given to Israel at Sinai, (the sum of which is the love of God and our neighbour,) with the body of "carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation." We should also confound those precepts of the New Testament which arise from the *relations* we sustain to God and one another, with those that arise merely from the *sovereign will* of the legislator, and could never have been

* I have not seen this pamphlet, but have taken a few quotations from it, contained in Backus's *Discourse on Faith and its influence.*

known but for his having expressly enjoined them. Concerning the former, an inspired writer does not scruple to refer the primitive Christians to that sense of right and wrong which is implanted in the minds of men in general; saying, *Whatsoever things are* TRUE, *whatsoever things are* HONEST, *whatsoever things are* JUST, *whatsoever things are* PURE, *whatsoever things are* LOVELY, *whatsoever things are of* GOOD REPORT; *if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* But concerning the latter, he directs their whole attention to the will of Christ. *Now I praise you brethren that you remember me in all things, and keep* THE ORDINANCES *as I delivered them unto you.—I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you*, &c. The one is commanded because it is *right;* the other is right because it is *commanded.* The great principles of the first are of perpetual obligation, and know no other change than that which arises from the varying of relations and conditions; but those of the last may be binding at one period of time, and utterly abolished at another.

We can clearly perceive that it were inconsistent with the perfections of God not to have required us to love him and one another, or to have allowed of the contrary. Children also must needs be required to obey their parents; *for this is* RIGHT. But it is not thus in positive institutions. Whatever wisdom there may be in them, and whatever discernment in us, we could not have known them had they not been expressly revealed; nor are they even enforced as being in themselves right, but merely from the authority of the lawgiver. Of them we may say, Had it pleased God, he might in various instances have enjoined the opposites. But of the other we are not allowed to suppose it possible or consistent with righteousness for God to have required any thing different from that which he has required. The obligation of man to love and obey his Creator must have been coeval with his existence; but it was not till he had planted a garden in Eden, and there put the man whom he had formed, and expressly prohibited the fruit of one of the trees on pain of death, that he came under a *positive* law.

The use to be made of this distinction in the present controversy is, *to judge in what cases we are to look for express precept or*

example, and in what cases we are not to look for them. Mr. Brainwood very properly observes, "That which is morally good in its own nature is a bounden duty, although it should not be particularly commanded or exemplified in all the word of God."* In obedience of this description there is not that need of minute rules and examples as in the other; but merely of general principles which naturally lead to all the particulars comprehended under them.

To require express precept or example, or to adhere in all cases to the literal sense of those precepts which are given us, in things of a moral nature, would greatly mislead us. We may by a disregard of that for which there is no express precept or precedent, omit what is manifestly right; and by an adherence to the letter of scriptural precepts, overlook the spirit of them, and do that which is manifestly wrong.

If we will do nothing without express precept or precedent, we must build no places for Christian worship, form no societies for visiting and relieving the afflicted poor, establish no schools, endow no hospitals, nor contribute any thing towards them, nor any thing towards printing or circulating the holy scriptures. Whether any person who fears God would on this ground consider himself excused from these duties, I cannot tell: it is on no better ground, however, that duties of equal importance have been disregarded; especially those of *family-prayer*, and the *sanctification* of the Lord's-day.

In Mr. Sandeman's time it was allowed, that "though there were neither precept nor precedent for *family prayer*, yet it seemed necessary for maintaining *the fear of God in a family.*" But this concession being at variance with more favourite principles, seems to have meant nothing. It is said that family prayer has long been disregarded by many who drink the deepest into the doctrine. With them, therefore, the maintaining of "the fear of God in a family," seems to be given up. This fact has operated much against the denomination, in the esteem of serious Christians; by whom they are considered as little other than a body of

* Letters, &c. p. 42.

worldly men. Of late, the system has been improved. Instead of owning, as formerly, that "the fear of God seemed to require this duty," it is now held to be unlawful, provided any part of the family be unbelievers, seeing it is holding communion with them. On the same principle, unbelievers, it is said, are not allowed to join in public prayers and praise, unless it be in an adjoining room, or with some kind of partition between them and the believers. In short, it is maintained, that "we ought only to join in prayer and praise with those with whom we partake of the Lord's supper."* Such are the consequences of confounding things moral with things positive or ceremonial.

We have no account of any particular injunctions given to Abraham respecting the ordering of his family. God had said to him in general, *Walk before me and be thou perfect;* and which, as to things of this nature, was sufficient. I know Abraham, saith the Lord, that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment. Can a child be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when it never hears its parents pray for it? Paul would not have eaten the Lord's supper with the ship's company; but he made no scruple of "giving thanks to God in presence of them all" at a common meal; and this, I presume, without any partition between his company and theirs, or so much as a mental reservation in respect to the latter. To join with unbelievers in what is not their duty, is to become partakers of other men's sins: but to allow them to join with us in what is their duty, is not so. The believer is not at liberty to join in the prayer of unbelief: but the unbeliever is at liberty, if he can, to join in the prayer of faith. To deny him this were to deny him the right of becoming a believer, and of doing that which every one ought to do. We ought to pray for such things as both believers and unbelievers stand in need of: if the latter unite with us in desire, it is well for them; if not, the guilt remains with themselves and not with us.

The *sanctification* of the Lord's day is said to be very generally disregarded among the admirers of this system. Having met, and

* See Braidwood's Letters, pp. 31—46.

kept the *ordinances*, they seem to have done with religion for that day, and feel at liberty to follow any amusement or worldly occupation during the remainder of it. This is the Christian liberty; and the opposite is pharisaism!

So far as relates to its being a day appointed for Christian worship, rather than the seventh; that is to say, so far as it is positive, the keeping of it is amply supported by scripture precedent: but as to keeping the day holy to the Lord, this, being *moral*, is left to be inferred from general principles. This is the case as to the manner of attending to all positive institutions. No injunctions were laid on the churches with respect to their keeping the Lord's supper in a holy manner; yet in the neglect of this lay the sin of the church at Corinth. And the reasoning which the Apostle used to convince them of their sin applies to the case in hand. He argues from the ordinance of breaking bread being the Lord's supper, that turning it into their own supper was rendering it null and void:* and by parity of reasoning it follows from the first day of the week being THE LORD'S DAY, that to do OUR OWN work, find OUR OWN pleasure, or speak OUR OWN words on that day is to make it void. Of the first he declared, *This is not to eat the Lord's supper;* and of the last he would, on the same principle have declared, *This is not to keep the Lord's day.*

If, on the other hand, we do every thing that is commanded in the New Testament, according to the letter of the precept, we shall in many cases overlook the true intent of it, and do that which is manifestly wrong.

The design of our Lord's precepts on prayer and alms-giving in the Sermon on the Mount, is to censure a spirit of *ostentation* in these duties; but a strict conformity to the letter of them would excuse us from all *social* prayer, and public contributions.

The design of the precept, *Resist not evil; but if a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also*, is to prohibit all private or selfish resentment, and to teach us that we ought rather

* I am aware that THEIR OWN SUPPER has been understood as referring to the LOVE FEASTS; but the reasoning of the Apostle seems to me to admit of no such meaning. How could he accuse them of making void the Lord's supper, if it were not the Lord's supper that they were eating?

to suffer wrong than go about to revenge an injury. Who does not admire the conduct of the noble Athenian, who, in a council of war held for the common safety of the country, when the Spartan chief menaced him with his cane, cried, "STRIKE; BUT HEAR ME!" Such, in effect, has been the language of the martyrs of Jesus in all ages, and such is the spirit of the precept. But to contend for a literal compliance with it were to reflect on the conduct of Christ himself, who, when smitten before the high priest, did not so exemplify it but remonstrated against the injury.

If the design of our Lord, in forbidding us to *lay up treasures on earth*, were absolutely and in all cases, to prohibit the increase of property, it was his design to overthrow what the scriptures acknowledge as a dictate of nature, namely, the duty of parents to provide for their children.* True it is, that men may hoard wealth in order to enrich and aggrandize their families to the neglect of present duty toward the poor and toward the cause of God: but this is the *abuse* of the principle, and ought to be corrected, and not the principle itself destroyed. Only let our own interest, and that of our children, be pursued *in subordination to God*, and *in consistency with other duties*, and all will be right. The contrary practice would load the industrious poor, and prevent their ever rising above their present condition, while it screened the indolent rich, who might expend the whole of their income, in self-gratification, provided they did not increase their capital.

Nor can any good reason be given, that I know of, why we should understand this precept as prohibiting in all cases the increase of property, any more than that of "selling what we have and giving alms," as absolutely forbidding us to *retain* it. To be consistent, the advocates of this interpretation should dispose of all their property, and distribute it among the poor. In other words, they should abolish all distinctions of rich and poor so far as concern themselves; not only of the *very* rich and *very* poor, but all distinction whatever, and be perfectly on an equality. When they shall do this, they will at least prove themselves to be

* 2 Cor. xi. 14.

sincere, and impart a weight to their censures against others which at present they do not possess.

It was not our Lord's design in this partial manner to lop off the branches of a worldly spirit; but to strike at the root of it. To *lay up treasures on earth* denotes the *desire* of amassing wealth, that we may be great, and shine, or in some way consume it upon our lusts; and herein consists the evil. There is as great a difference between a character who acts on this principle, and one whom God prospers in the path of duty, and in full exercise of benevolence toward all about him, as between one who engages in the chase of worldly applause, and another who, seeking the good of those around him, must needs be respected and loved.

The evil which arises from such interpretations, whatever be their tendency, does not consist in throwing civil society into a state of disorder; for though men may admit them in theory, yet they will contrive some method of practically evading them, and reconcile their consciences to it. The mischief lies in the hypocrisy, self-deception, and unchristian censures upon others to which they give occasion.

Much has been spoken and written on "observing *all things*, which Christ hath commanded us," and on the authority of *apostolic example*. Both are literally binding on Christians in matters of positive institution, and in things moral the spirit or design of them is indispensable: but to enforce a literal conformity in many cases would be to defeat the end, and reduce obedience to unmeaning ceremony.

In eastern countries, *the washing of the feet*, after the toils of a journey, was a common and necessary refreshment; and our Lord, to teach his disciples *in love to serve one another*, took upon himself the humble office of a servant, and washed their feet; enjoining upon them to do that to one another which he had done to them. But to conform to this custom where it is not practised, nor considered as necessary to be done by any one, is to defeat the end of the precept by substituting a form in the place of humble and affectionate service. We may wash the saints' feet, and neglect to dry their clothes, or to administer necessary comfort to them when cold and weary. If, in commands of this nature, no

regard is to be had to times, places, and circumstances, why do Sandemanians allow it to be binding "*only* when it can be an act of kindness to do so?"

It was customary in the east, and still is so in many countries, for men to express affection to each other by *a kiss;* and the apostles directed that this common mode of salutation should be used religiously. But in a country where the practice is principally confined to the expression of love between the sexes, or at most among relations, it is much more liable to misconstruction and abuse; and being originally a human custom, where that custom ceases, though the spirit of the precept is binding, yet the form of it, I conceive, is not so.

For a man to have his *head uncovered* was once the commonly received sign of his authority, and as such was enjoined: but with us it is a sign of subjection. If therefore, we are obliged to wear any sign of the one or of the other in our religious assemblies, it requires to be reversed.

The Apostle taught that it was a shame for a man to wear *long hair* like a woman, not that he would have concerned himself about the length of the hair, this being a distinctive mark of the sexes, he appealed to *nature* itself against their being confounded; that is, against a man's appearance in the garb of a woman.

In the primitive times Christians had their *love feasts:* they do not appear, however, to have been a divine appointment, but the mere spontaneous expressions of mutual affection; as when *breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.* While these feasts were conducted with propriety, all was well; but in time they were abused, and then they were mentioned in language not very respectful, *These are spots in* YOUR *feasts of charity.* Had they been of divine institution, it was not their being abused that would have drawn forth such language. The Lord's supper was abused as well as they; but the abuse in that case was corrected, and the ordinance itself reinculcated.

These brief remarks are intended to prove that, in the above particulars, Mr. Sandeman and his followers have mistaken the true intent of Christ and his apostles. But whether it be so or

not, the proportion of zeal which is expended upon them is far beyond what their importance requires. If, as a friend to believers' baptism, I cherish an overweening conceit of myself, and of my denomination, confining the kingdom of heaven to it, and shutting my eyes against the excellencies of others, am I not carnal? The Jews, in the time of Jeremiah, thought themselves very secure on account of their forms and priviliges. Pointing to the sacred edifice, and its divinely instituted worship, they exclaimed, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these:* but were they not carnal? In how many ways, alas are poor blind mortals addicted to err!

When the reflecting Christian considers what contentions have been maintained about this nature, what divisions have been produced, and what accusations have been preferred against those who stand aloof from such strifes, as though they *did not so much as profess to observe all things which Christ has commanded*, he will drop a tear of pity over human weakness. But when he sees men so scrupulous in such matters that they cannot conscientiously be present at any worship but their own, yet making no scruple of joining in theatrical and other vain amusements, he will be shocked, and must needs suspect something worse than weakness; something which strains at a gnat, but can swallow a camel; something, in short, which, however good men may have been carried away by it, can hardly be conceived to have had its origin in a good man's mind.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER X.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE APOSTLES PROCEEDED IN FORMING AND ORGANIZING CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

My Dear Friend,

You need not be told of the fierce disputes which were first agitated by the leaders of this denomination, and which have since extended to others besides those who choose to be called after their names, concerning the order, government, and discipline of gospel churches. To write upon every minute practice found in the New Testament would be to bewilder ourselves and perplex the subject. If we can ascertain the *principles* on which the apostles proceeded in all they did, it will answer a much better purpose.

For me to contend for an Erastian latitude in matters of church government and discipline, or to imagine that no divine directions are left us on the subject, but that the church must be modelled and governed according to circumstances. This were to open a door to every corruption that human ingenuity and depravity might devise. But, on the other hand, it is no less wide of the truth to consider the whole which is left us as a system of *ordinances*, or *positive institutions*, requiring in all cases the most literal and punctilious observance. Such a view of the subject, among other evil consequences, must introduce perpetual discord; seeing it aims to establish things from the New Testament which are not in it.

It may be thought that in reasoning thus I adopt the princples of the *Episcopalians* against the *Puritans* who denied the necessity of

express precept or precedent from the scriptures, which the others pleaded for. Had Episcopalians only denied this in respect of moral duties, I should have thought them in the right. It certainly is not necessary that we should have express precept or precedent for every duty we owe to our neighbours, but merely that we keep within the general principle of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us. And the same may be said of various duties toward God. If in our thoughts, affections, prayers, or praises, we be influenced by *love* to his name, though his precepts will be our guide, as to the general modes in which love shall be expressed, yet we shall not need them for every thing pertaining to particular duties. When Josiah, on hearing the book of the law read to him, *rent his clothes and wept*, it was not in conformity with any particular precept or precedent, but the spontaneous effusion of love. The questions between the Episcopalians and the Puritans did not relate to moral obligations, but to "rites and ceremonies," in divine worship, which the church claimed a "power to decree." Hence it was common for them to urge it upon the Puritans, that if their principles were fully acted upon they must become Antipædobaptists; or, as they called them Anabaptists:* a proof this, not only that in their judgment there was neither precept nor precedent in the scriptures in favour of pædobaptism, but that it was in matters of *positive institution* that they claimed to act without either.

The question is, On what principles did the apostles proceed in forming and organizing Christian churches *positive or moral?* If the former, they must have been furnished with an exact model or pattern, like that which was given to Moses in the mount, and have done all things according to it: but if the latter, they would only be furnished with *general principles*, comprehending, but not specifying, a great variety of particulars.

That the framing of the tabernacle was positive there can be no doubt; and that a part of the religion of the New Testament is so, is equally evident. Concerning this the injunctions of the Apostles are minute and very express. *Be ye followers* (imitators) *of*

* Preface to Bishop Sanderson's Sermons, Sect. 23.

me as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ORDINANCES *as I delivered them to you.—For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.* But were we to attempt to draw up a formula of church government, worship and discipline, which should include any thing more than *general outlines*, and to establish it upon express New-Testament authorities, we should attempt what is impracticable.

Doubtless the apostles acted under divine direction: but in things of a moral nature, that direction consisted not in providing them with a model or pattern, in the manner of that given to Moses, but in furnishing them with general principles, and enduing them with holy wisdom to apply them as occasions required.

We learn, from the Acts and the Epistles, that the first churches were congregations of faithful men, voluntarily united together for the stated ministration of the word, the administration of Christian ordinances, and the mutually assisting of each other in promoting the cause of Christ; that they were governed by bishops and deacons of their own choosing; that a bishop was an overseer, not of other ministers, but of the flock of God; that the government and discipline of each church was within itself; that the gifts of the different members were so employed as to conduce to the welfare of the body; and that in cases of disorder every proper means was used to vindicate the honour of Christ and reclaim the party. These, and others which might be named, are what I mean by *general principles*. They are sometimes illustrated by the incidental occurrence of examples; (which examples in all *similar cases* are binding;) but it is not always so. That a variety of cases occur in our time respecting which we have nothing more than general principles to direct us, is manifest to every person of experience and reflection. We know that churches were formed, officers chosen and ordained, and prayer and praise conducted with "the understanding," or so as to be understood by others: but in what particular manner they proceeded in each, we are not told. We have no account of the formation of a single church, no ordination service, nor any such thing as a formula of worship. We are taught to sing praises to God in psalms, hymns, and spiri-

ual songs, but have no inspired tunes. We have accounts of the election of church officers; but no mention of the mode of proceeding, or how they ascertained the mind of the church. If we look for express precept or example for the removal of a pastor from one situation to another, we shall find none. We are taught, however, that for the church to grow unto an holy temple in the Lord, it requires to be *fitly framed together*. The want of *finesse* in a connexion, therefore, especially if it impede the growth of the spiritual temple, may justify a removal. Or if there be no want of fitness, yet if the material be adapted to occupy a more important station, a removal of it may be very proper. Such a principle may be misapplied to ambitious and interested purposes; but if the increase of the temple be kept in view, it is lawful, and in some cases attended with great and good effects.

This instance may suffice instead of a hundred, and serves to show that the forms and orders of the New-Testament church, much more than those of the Old, are founded on the reason of things. They appear to be no more than what men possessed of the wisdom from above, would, as it were instinctively, or of their own accord, fall into, even though no specific directions should be given them.

That such were the principles on which the apostles proceeded is manifest from their own *professions*, or from the *general precepts* which they addressed to the churches. These were as follows: *Let all things be done* TO EDIFYING.—*Let all things be done* DECENTLY AND IN ORDER.—*Follow after the things that* MAKE FOR PEACE, *and things wherewith* ONE MAY EDIFY ANOTHER. Whatever measures had a tendency to build up the church of God and individuals in their most holy faith, these they pursued. Whatever measures approved themselves to minds endued with holy wisdom as fit and lovely, and as tending, like good discipline in an army, to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, these they followed, and inculcated on the churches. And, however worldly minds may have abused the principle by introducing vain customs under the pretence of *decency*, it is that which, understood in its simple and original sense, must still be the test of good order and Christian discipline.

The discipline of the primitive churches occupies no prominent place in their character. It is not that ostentatious thing which, under the name of an "ordinance," has become of late a mere bone of contention. It was simply the carrying into effect the great principle of brotherly love, and the spirit with which it was exercised was that of long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and meekness.

The way in which the apostles *actually proceeded*, in the forming and organizing of churches, corresponds with these statements. When a number of Christians were assembled together in the days of pentecost they were the first Christian church. But at first they had no deacons, and probably no pastors, except the apostles: and if the *reason* of things had not required it, they might have continued to have none. But in the course of things new service rose upon their hands, therefore they must have new servants to perform it;* for, said the apostles, *It is not* REASON *that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables: wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.* In this proceeding we perceive nothing of the air of a ceremony, nothing like that of punctilious attention to forms, which marks obedience to a positive institute; but merely the conduct of men endued with the wisdom from above; servants appointed when service required it, and the number of the one proportioned to the quantity of the other. All things are done *decently and in order;* all things are done to *edifying*.

In the course of things, the apostles, who had supplied the place of bishops, or pastors, would be called to travel into other parts of the world, and then it is likely the church at Jerusalem would have a bishop, or bishops of their own. As the number of deacons was regulated by the work to be done, so would it be by bishops, both in this and in other churches. A large church, where much service was to be done, required seven deacons; and where they abounded in numbers and spiritual gifts there might be a plurality of pastors. With respect to us, where the *reason* of the things exists, that is where there are churches whose numbers re-

* A DEACON, as well as a minister, means a SERVANT.

quire it, and whose ability admits of it, it is still proper :* but for a small church to have more pastors than one is as unnecessary as to have seven deacons. Such a rule must favour idleness, and confine useful ministers from extending their labours. To place two or three in a post which might be filled by one, must leave many other places unoccupied. Such a system is more adapted for show than for promoting the kingdom of Christ.

It may serve to illustrate and simplify the subject if we compare the conduct of the apostles with that of a company of missionaries in our own times. What, indeed, was an apostle but an inspired missionary? Allowing only for ordinary Christian missionaries being uninspired, we shall see in their history all the leading characteristics of apostolic practice.

Conceive of a church, or of a society of Christians out of a number of churches, or of "any two agreeing together," as undertaking a mission among the heathen. One of the first things they would attend to would be the selection of suitable missionaries; next they would instruct them in the things necessary to their undertaking; and after this, send them forth to preach the gospel. Such exactly was the process of our Lord towards his apostles. He first selected them; then, during his personal ministry, instructed them; and, after his resurrection, gave them their commission, with a rich effusion of the Holy Spirit to fit them for their undertaking.

The missionaries on arriving at the place of action would first unite in social prayer and fellowship, and this would be the first

* I say *whose ability admits of it*: for there is equal proof from the New Testament that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, as there is of a plurality of elders. But the zeal for the latter has not always been accompanied by a zeal for the former. If the term elder must be understood to be not only a term of office, but of the pastoral office exclusively, and a plurality of them be required, why is not a plurality of them supported? The office of elder in those churches which are partial to the system is little more than nominal: for while an elder is employed like other men in the necessary cares of life, he cannot ordinarily fulfil the duties of his office. *No man that warreth in this warfare,* (unless it be in aid of a poor church,) *ought to entangle himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

Christian church. Thus the apostles, and those who adhered to them, first met in an upper room for prayer, preparatory to their attack on the kingdom of Satan; and this little "band of about an hundred and twenty" formed the first Christian church: and when others were converted to Christ and joined them, they are said to be "added to the church."

Again: The first missionaries to a heathen country could not be chosen by those to whom they were sent, but by him or them who sent them; nor would their influence be confined to a single congregation, but, by a kind of parental authority, would extend to all the societies that might be raised by means of their labours. It would be different with succeeding pastors, who might be raised up from among the converts; they would of course be chosen by their brethren, and their authority be confined to those who elected them. Thus the apostles were not constituted such by the churches, but received their appointment immediately from Christ; nor was their authority limited to any particular church, but extended to all. In this they stand distinguished from ordinary pastors who are elected by the churches, and whose authority is confined to the churches that elected them.

Again: The first missionaries to a heathen country would be employed in the *planting* of churches wherever proper materials were found for the purpose; and if the work so increased upon their hands as to be too much for them, they would depute others whom God should gift and qualify, *like-minded* with themselves, to assist them in it. Some one person at least of this description would be present at the formation and organization of every church, to see to it that all things were done "decently and in order." And if there were any other churches in the neighbourhood, their elders and messengers would doubtless be present, and, to express their brotherly concurrence, would join in it. Thus the apostles planted churches; and when elders were ordained, the people chose them, and they, by the solemn laying on of hands, invested them with the office:* and when the work increased upon their hands, they appointed such men as Timothy and Titus as evangelists, to "set things in order" in their stead.†

* Acts xiv. 23. † 2 Tim. ii. 2. Titus i. 5.

In these ordinations, a Paul or a Titus would preside; but the other elders who were present would unite in brotherly concurrence, and in importuning a blessing on the parties: and hence there would be the *laying on of the hands of the presbytery*, or elders.

I may add, though it does not immediately respect any question here at issue, If the first missionaries, and those appointed by them, planted churches set them in order, and presided at the ordination of elders, *it was not because the same things would not have been* VALID if done by others, but because they would not have been DONE. Let but churches be planted, set in order, and scripturally organized, and whether it be by the missionaries or succeeding native pastors, all is good and acceptable to Christ. And such, I conceive, is the state of things with respect to the apostles and succeeding ministers. The same things which were done by the apostles were done by others appointed by them; and had they been done by elders whom they had not appointed, provided the will of Christ had been properly regarded, they would not have objected to their *validity*. This is certainly true in some particulars, and I see not why it should not be in all. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus *that he might charge some that they taught no other doctrine:* but if the Ephesian teachers had been themselves attached to the truth, neither Paul nor Timothy would have been offended with them for having superceded their interference. He also left Titus in Crete to *set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city:* but if the Cretians themselves had had sufficient wisdom and virtue to have regulated their own affairs by the word of God, I believe their order would not have been reckoned disorder. Had there been elders already ordained among them competent to assist in the ordination of others, if we may judge from the general tenor of apostolic practice, instead of objecting to the validity of their proceedings, both Paul and Titus would, though absent in the flesh, have been with them in the spirit, *joying and beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ.*

The sum is, that church government and discipline are not a body of ceremonies; but a few general principles and examples,

sufficient for all practical purposes, but not sufficient to satisfy those who, in New Testament directions, expect to find an Old Testament ritual. It is not difficult to perceive the wisdom of God in thus varying the two dispensations. The Jewish church was an army of soldiers, who had to go through a variety of forms in learning their discipline: the Christian church is an army going forth to battle. The members of the first were taught punctilious obedience, and led with great formality through a variety of religious evolutions: but those of the last, (though they also must keep their ranks, and act in obedience to command whenever it is given,) are required to attend, not so much to the mechanical as to the mental, not so much to the minute observations of forms, as to the spirit and design of them. The order of the one would almost seem to be appointed for order's sake: but in that of the other the utility of every thing is apparent. The obedience of the former was that of children; the latter of sons arrived at maturer age.

As our Saviour abolished the Jewish law of divorce, and reduced marriage to its original simplicity; so, having abolished the form and order of the church as appointed by Moses, he redu[illegible] it to what, as to its first principles, it was from the beginning, [illegible] to what must have corresponded with the desires of believers in every age. It was natural for "the sons of God" in the days of Seth to assemble together, and "call upon the name of the Lord;" and their unnatural fellowship with unbelievers brought on the deluge. And even under the Jewish dispensation, wicked men, though descended from Abraham, were not considered as Israelites *indeed*, or true citizens of Zion. The friends of God were then the "companions of those that feared him." They "spake often one to another," and assembled for mutual edification. What then is gospel church fellowship but godliness ramified, or the principle of holy love reduced to action? There is scarcely a precept on the subject of church discipline but what may, in substance, be found in the proverbs of Solomon.

It does not follow from hence that all forms of worship and church government are indifferent, and left to be accommodated to times, places and circumstances. The principles or general

outlines of things are marked out, and we are not at liberty to deviate from them; nor are they to be filled up by worldly policy, but by a pure desire of carrying them into effect according to their true intent: to which may be added, that, so far as they are exemplified in the New Testament it is our duty in similar cases to follow the example.

It does follow, however, that scripture precedent, important as it is, is not binding on Christians in things of a *moral nature*, unless the REASON of the thing be the same in both cases. Of this, proof has been offered in Letter IX, relative to the washing of the feet, the kiss of charity, &c. It also follows that in attending to *positive institutions* neither express precept nor precedent is necessary in what respects the *holy manner* of performing them, nor binding in regard of mere *accidental circumstances*, which do not properly belong to them. It required neither express precept nor precedent to make it the duty of the Corinthians when meeting to celebrate the Lord's supper, to do it *soberly and in the fear of God*, nor to render the contrary a sin. There are also *circumstances* which may on some occasions accompany a positive institution, and not on others; which being, therefore, no part of it are not binding. It is a fact that the Lord's supper was first celebrated with unleavened bread; for no leaven was to be found at the time in all the Jewish habitations; but no mention being made, either in the institution, or in the repetition of it by the Apostle, we conclude it was a mere accidental circumstance no more belonging to the ordinance than its having been in "a large upper room." It is a fact, too, that our Lord and his disciples sat *in a reclining posture* at the supper, after the manner of sitting at their ordinary meals; yet none imagine this to be binding upon us. It is also a fact, with regard to the *time*, that our Saviour first sat down with his disciples, on the evening of the *fifth* day of the week, the night in which he was betrayed; but though that was a memorable night, and is mentioned by the apostle in connexion with the supper, yet no one supposes it to be binding upon us; especially as we know it was afterwards celebrated on the first day of the week by the church at Troas.

Much has been advanced, however, in favour of the first day of the week, as exclusively the time for the celebration of the Lord's supper, and of its being still binding on Christians. A weekly communication might, for any thing we know, be the general practice of the first churches; and certainly there can be no objection to the thing itself; but to render it a term of communion, is laying bonds in things wherein Christ has laid none. That the supper was celebrated on the first day of the week by the church at Troas is certain; that it was so every first day of the week, is possible, perhaps probable; but the passage does not *prove that it was so;* and still less, as Mr. Braidwood affirms, that "it can only be dispensed on that day."* The words of the institution are, As OFTEN *as ye eat*, &c. without determining how often. Those who would make these terms so indeterminate as not to denote *frequency*, and consequently to be no rule at all as to time, do not sufficiently consider their force. The term "often," we all know, denotes frequency; and "as often" denotes the degree of that frequency where frequency itself is not. It might as well be said that the words, How MUCH *she hath glorified herself*, so MUCH *torment give her*, convey no idea of Babylon having glorified herself more than others, but merely of her punishment being proportioned to her pride, be it much or little.

The truth appears to be that the Lord's supper ought to be frequently celebrated; but the exact time of it is a circumstance which does not belong to the ordinance itself.

Similar remarks might be made on female communion, a subject on which a great deal has been written of late years in the baptismal controversy. Whether there be express precept or precedent for it, or not, it is of no consequence: for the distinction of sex is a mere circumstance in no wise affecting the qualifications required, and therefore not belonging to the institution. It is of just as much account as whether a believer be a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free man; that is, it is of no account at all: *For there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female; but all are one in Christ Jesus.* Express precept or prece-

* Letters, p. 44

dent might as well be demanded for the parties being tall or low, black or white, sickly or healty, as for their being male or female.

To accommodate the spirit of New Testament practice to the fluctuating manners and inclinations of men is certainly what ought not to be: but neither can it be denied that many of the apostolic practices were suited to the state of things at the time, and would not have been what they were if circumstances had been different. To instance in their proceedings on the *seventh* and *first* days of the week—It is well known, that in preaching to the Jews, and others who attended with them, they generally took the *seventh* day of the week :* the reason of which doubtless was, its being the day in which they were to be met with at their synagogues. Hence it is that on the *first* day of the week so little is said of their preaching to unbelievers, and so much of the celebrating of Christian ordinances, which are represented as the specific object of their coming together.† But the same motive that induced the Apostles to preach to unbelievers chiefly on the *seventh* day of the week would, in *our* circumstances, have induced them to preach to them on the *first*, that being now the day on which they ordinarily assemble together. In countries where Christianity has so far obtained as for the legislature to respect the first day of the week as a day of rest, instead of having now and then an individual come into our assemblies, as the primitive churches had, and as churches raised in heathen countries must still have, we have multitudes who on that day are willing to hear the word. In such circumstances the apostles would have preached both to believers and unbelievers, and administered Christian ordinances all on the same day. To frame our worship in things of this nature after apostolic example, without considering the reasons of their conduct, is to stumble in darkness, instead of walking as the children of the light. Yet this is the kind of apostolic practice by which the churches have been teazed and divided, the great work of preaching the gospel to the ungodly neglected, and Christianity reduced to litigious trifling.

* Acts xiii. 42. xviii. 4. xvi. 13. † 1 Cor. xi. 20. Acts xx. 7

If the practice of Christ and his apostles be in all cases binding upon Christians, whether the reason of the thing be the same or not, why do they not eat the Lord's supper with unleavened bread, and in a reclining posture? And why do they not assemble together merely to celebrate this ordinance, and that on a Lord's day *evening*? From the accounts in 1 Cor. xi. 20. and Acts xx. 7. two things appear to be evident—First: That the celebration of the Lord's supper was the *specific object* of the coming together, both of the church at Corinth, and of that at Troas: the former came together (professedly) *to eat the Lord's supper*; the latter are said to have come together *to break bread*. Secondly: That it was on the evening of the day. This is manifest not only from its being called the Lord's *supper*, but from the Corinthians making it their own supper, and from its being followed at Troas by a sermon from Paul which required "lights," and continued till "midnight."

I do not mean to say that the church at either Corinth or Troas had no other worship during the first day of the week than this; but that this was attended to as a distinct object of assembling, and, if there were any other, after the other was over.

It may be thought that these were mere accidental circumstances, and therefore not binding on us. It does not appear to me, however, that we are at liberty to turn the Lord's supper into a breakfast. But if we be, and choose to do so, let us not pretend to a punctilious imitation of the first churches.

It is well known to be a peculiarity in Sandemanian societies not to determine any question by a *majority*. They, like the first churches must be *of one mind*; and, if there be any dissentients who cannot be convinced, they are excluded. Perfect unanimity is certainly desirable, not only in the great principles of the gospel but in questions of discipline, and even in the choice of officers; but how if this be unattainable? The question is, whether it be more consistent with the spirit and practice of the New Testament for the greater part of the church to forbear with the less, or Diotrephes like, to cast them out of the church; and this for having, according to the best of their judgments, acted up to the scriptural directions? One of these modes of proceeding must of

necessity be pursued ; for there is no middle course : and if we loved one another with genuine Christian affection we could not be at a loss which to prefer. The New Testament speaks of an election of seven deacons, but says nothing on the mode of its being conducted. Now, considering the number of members in the church at Jerusalem, unless they were directed in their choice by inspiration, which there is no reason think they were, it is more than a thousand to one that those seven persons who were chosen were not the persons whom every individual member first proposed. What then can we suppose them to have done ? They might discuss the subject till they become of one mind ; or, which is much more likely, the lessor number, perceiving the general wish, and considering that their brethren had understanding as well as they, might peaceably give up their own opinions to the greater, "submitting one to another in the fear of God." But suppose a hundred of the members had said as follows :—'Without reflecting on any who have been named, we think two or three other brethren more answerable to the qualifications required by the apostles than some of them ; but, having said this, we are willing to acquiesce in the general voice'—Should they or would they have been excluded for this ? Assuredly the exclusions of the New Testament were for very different causes !

The statements of the society in St. Martins-legrand on this subject are sophistical, self-contradictory, and blasphemous. "Nothing," say they, "is decided by the vote of the *majority*. In some cases indeed there are dissenting voices. The reasons of the dissent are thereupon proposed and considered. *If they are scriptural*, the whole church has cause to change its opinion ; *if not*, and the person persists in his opposition to *the word of God*, the church is bound to reject him." But who is to judge whether the reasons of the dissentients be scriptural or not ? The *majority* no doubt, and an opposition to their opinion is an opposition to *the word of God.*

Humility and love will do great things toward unanimity ; but this forced unanimity is the highest refinement of spiritual tyranny. It is being compelled to believe as the church believes, and

that not only on subjects clearly revealed, and of great importance; but in matters of mere opinion, in which the most upright minds may differ, and to which no standard can apply. What can he who *exalteth himself above all that is called God*, do more than set up his decisions as *the word of God*, and require men on pain of excommunication to receive them?

I am yours, &c.

LETTER XI.

OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

My Dear Friend,

You are aware that the admirers of Messrs. Glass and Sandeman generally value themselves on their "clear views of the gospel, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom;" and I doubt not but they have written things concerning both which deserve attention. It appears to me, however that they have done much more in detecting error, than in advancing truth; and that their writings on the kingdom of Christ relate more to what it is not, than to what it is. Taking up the sentence of our Lord, *My kingdom is not of this world*, they have said much, and much to purpose, against worldly establishments of religion, with their unscriptural appendages; but, after all, have they shown what the kingdom of Christ is; and does their religion taken as a whole, exemplify it in its genuine simplicity? If writing and talking about "simple truth" would do it, they would not be wanting: but it will not. Is there not as much of a worldly spirit in their religion as in that which they explode, only that it is of a different species? Nay, is there not a greater defect among them, in what relates to *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit*, than will often be found in what they denominate Babylon itself.

A clear view of the nature of Christ's kingdom would hardly be supposed to overlook the Apostle's account of it. *The kingdom of God*, he says, *is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.* From this statement we should expect to find the essence of it placed in things moral rather than in

things ceremonial; in things clearly revealed rather than in matters of doubtful disputation; and in things of prime importance rather than in those of but comparatively small account. We certainly should not expect to see the old error of the pharisees revived, that of tithing mint and rue to the neglect of judgment, mercy, and the love of God.

We should also expect the most eminent subjects of this kingdom would be men who, while they conscientiously attend to the positive institutions of Christ, abhor the thought of making them a substitute for sobriety, righteousness, and godliness: men who need not a special precept for every duty; but, drinking deeply into the law of love, are ready, like the father of the faithful, to obey all its dictates.

And, as the kingdom of God consists in *peace*, we should expect its most eminent subjects to be distinguished by that dove-like spirit which seeks the things which make for peace. They may indeed be called upon to contend for the faith, and that earnestly; but contention will not be their element: nor will their time be chiefly occupied in conversing on the errors, absurdities, and faults of others. Considering *bitter zeal and strife in the heart* as belonging to the wisdom that descendeth not from above, but which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, they are concerned to lay aside every thing of the kind, and to cherish the spirit of a newborn babe.

Finally: The *joys* which they possess in having heard and believed the good news of salvation may be expected to render them dead to those of the world; so much so at least, that they will have no need to repair to the diversions of the theatre, or other carnal pastimes, in order to be happy; nor will they dream of such methods of asserting their Christian liberty, and opposing pharisaism.

Whether these marks of Christ's subjects be eminently conspicuous among the people alluded to, those who are best acquainted with them are able to determine; but so far as appears from their writings, whatever excellencies distinguish them, they do not consist in things of this nature.

It is remarkable, that the Apostle, after representing the kingdom of God as being *not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit*, adds, *for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and aproved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things where with one may edify another.* This not only shows what the prominent features of Christ's kingdom are, but affords a striking contrast to the kingdom contended for by Sandemanians, which, instead of recommending itself to both God and man, would seem rather to have been copied from the religion of that people who "pleased not God, and were contrary to all men."

The substitution of forms and ceremonies for the love God and man is one of the many ways in which depravity has been wont to operate. What else is Paganism, apostate Judaism, Popery, and many other things which pass for religion? And whether the same principle does not pervade the system in question, and even constitute one of its leading features, let the impartial observer judge. If it does not place the kingdom of God in meat and drink, it places it in things analogous to them, rather than in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

It is true, the forms contended for in this case are not the same as in many other, being such only as are thought to be enjoined in the scriptures. That many of them arise from a misunderstanding of the scriptures, I have endeavoured to show in a former letter; but, whether it be so, or not, if an improper stress be laid upon them, they may be as injurious as though they were not scriptural. When the brazen serpent became an idol, it was as pernicious as other idols. The tithing of herbs, though in itself right, yet being done to the neglect of "weightier matters," became the very characteristic hypocricy.

It has been said that obedience to the least of God's commands cannot be unfriendly to obedience to the greatest; and if it be genuine, it cannot; but to deny the possibility of the great things of God's law being set aside by a fondness for little things, is to deny the fact just refered to, and discovers but a slender acquaintance with the human heart, which certainly can burn in zeal for

a ceremony, when as to the love of God and man, it is as cold as death.

If the nature of Christ's kingdom were placed in those things in in which the Apostle places it, the government and discipline of the church would be considered as *means*, and not as *ends*. The design order and discipline in an army is to encounter the enemy to advantage ; and such was the order and discipline of the primitive churches. It was still peaceable, and, affectionate ; without parade, and without disputes. It consisted in all things being done to edifying, and in such an arrangement of energies as that every gift should be employed to the best advantage in building up the church, and attacking the kingdom of Satan. But is this the order and discipline of which so much has of late been written ? Surely not ! From the days of Glass and Sandeman until now, it does not appear to have been their object to convert men to Christ from among the ungodly, but to make proselytes of other Christians. And is this to understand the true nature of Christ's kingdom ! If there were not another fact, this alone is sufficient to prove that their religion, though it may contain a portion of truth, and though godly men may have been misled by it, yet, taken as a whole, is not of God. There is not a surer mark of false religion than its tendency and aim being to make proselytes to ourselves rather than converts to Christ.*

That there is neither tendency in the system, nor aim in those who enter fully into it, to promote the kingdom of Christ, is manifest, and easily accounted for. They neither expect, nor, as it would seem, *desire* its progress ; but even look with a jealous eye on all opinions and efforts in favour of its enlargement ; as though, should it be greatly extended, it must needs be a kingdom of this world ! This, I am aware, is a serious charge : but it does not originate with me, Mr. Braidwood, of Edinburgh, who must be allowed to have the best opportunities of knowing the system and its adherents, and who cannot be supposed to write under the influence of prejudice, seeing he acknowledges he has "learned many

* Acts xx. 30.

things from the ancient writings of this class of professing Christians in relation to the simple doctrine of the gospel, and the nature of Christ's kingdom"—Mr. Braidwood, I say, writes as follows :—" I feel it incumbent on me to warn the disciples of Jesus against that state of mind which makes them slow to believe the prophecies relating to the extent of the Redeemer's kingdom."—" It is remarkable that some Gentile Christians now show a disposition toward the Jews, similar to that which, in the apostolic age, the Jews manifested toward the Gentiles, namely, *a dislike to their salvation!* It is truly mortifying to reflect that the greater number of those who indulge this state of mind, are persons much instructed in the knowledge of the gospel, and of the things concerning the kingdom of God. They call it a *Jewish notion* to expect an extensive influence of the word of God among all nations. The very opposite is the fact ; for the apostle Paul, describing his countrymen, says, *They please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles that they might be saved.* And even *believing* Jews were not very willing to acknowledge the first Gentile converts, and were surprised when they heard that God had also granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life. But the apostle thus describes the spirit by which he regulated his own conduct : *I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved!*

" The freeness of divine grace, its sovereignity, its opposition to the most darling inclinations of the human heart, the spiritual and heavenly nature of Christ's kingdom—all these have been used as arguments against the conversion of the Jews, or any signal prosperity of the gospel among the Gentiles! And they whose heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, and for the nations, is that they may be saved, are accused of ignorance of the gospel, and of wishing to see a corrupt faith prevail, especially if they dare to express a hope that their prayers will be answered!"

It would seem, from hence, to be the interest of this class of professing Christians, that the world and the church should continue what they are. They glory in the latter being few in number : if therefore, any considerable part of mankind were to em-

brace even what they account the truth, they would have nothing left, in comparison, whereof to glory!

Mr. Braidwood addresses the party on whom he animadverts as follows "Will the purest and simplest views that can be entertained of the truth concerning Jesus have any tendency to make us less concerned about the salvation of men, and more anxious to darken the things revealed in the scriptures concerning the success of the gospel among all nations? No, my friend, let us be ware of imputing to the gospel a state of mind which so ill accords with its genuine influence, and which can only arise from *prejudice, and from mistaken views of the Messiah's kingdom.* That glorious kingdom, instead of dying away, as some have supposed, like an expiring lamp, before the advent of its eternal king, shall break in pieces and *consume all opposing kingdoms, and shall stand forever*, although its own subjects, acting consistently, use no carnal weapons."*

The writer to whom these excellent remarks are addressed, signs himself *Palæmon.* I know not who he is; but as the signature is the same as that affixed to Mr. Sandeman's *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, I conclude he is, and wishes to be thought a Sandemanian. Mr. Br idwood calls him his "friend," and speaks of his being "mortified" by these his erroneous sentiments, as though he had a feeling for Palæmon's general creed, or "that instruction in the knowledge of the gospel, and of the things concerning the kingdom of God," which he and others had received. For my part without deciding upon the state of individuals, I am persuaded that these people, with all their professions of "clear views," "simple truth," and "simple belief," have imbibed a corrupt and dangerous system of doctrine.

Palæmon, whoever he is, would do well to *examine himself whether he be in the faith;* and were I in Mr. Braidwood's place, I should feel it to be my duty to re-examine what I had "learned from the ancient writings of this class of professing Christians relative to the simple doctrine of the gospel, and the nature of Christ's kingdom;" and to ask myself what I had asked my friend, *Whether that can be pure and simple truth which is productive of such effects?* I am yours, &c.

* Letters on a variety of Subjects, pp. 28. 30.

LETTER XII.

THE SPIRIT OF THE SYSTEM COMPARED WITH THAT OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

My Dear Friend.

You are aware that doctrines, whether true or false, if really believed, become principles of action. They are a mould into which the mind is cast, and from which it receives its impression. An observant eye will easily perceive a *spirit* which attends different religions, and different systems of the same religion; which, over and above the diversities arising from natural temper, will manifest itself in their respective adherents. Paganganism, Mahometanism, Deism, apostate Judaism, and the various systems which have appeared under the name of Christianity, have each discovered a spirit of their own; and so has Christianity itself. Thus it was from the beginning: those who received "another doctrine," received with it "another spirit;" and hence we are told of "the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error:" he that had the one was said to be "of God," and he that had the other "not of God."

I hope it will be understood that in what I write on this subject there is no reference to individuals, nor any wish to judge men indiscriminately by the names under which they pass, nor any desire to charge the evils which may belong to the system on all who have discovered a partiality in its favour, or who have defended particular parts of it. I shall only take a brief review of the spirit which is of God, and compare that of Mr. Sandeman, and the generality of its admirers, with it.

First: The spirit of primitive Christianity was full of *the devout and the affectionate.* Of this, there needs little to be said in a way of proof, as the thing is evident to any one who is acquainted with the Bible. The Psalms of David are full of it; and so is the New Testament. Primitive Christianity was the religion of *love.* It breathed grace, mercy, and peace, on all that loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Among such it would not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Its faithfulness was tempered with brotherly kindness. It had compassion for the ignorant, and them that were out of the way; and while siding with God against the wicked, it wept over them, and was willing to do or suffer any thing, if by any means it might save some of them. But is this Sandemanianism? You will scarcely meet with *terms* expressive of devotion or affection, in any of its productions, unless it be to hold them up to ridicule. It appears to be at war with all devotion and devout men. Its most indignant opposition and bitterest invectives are reserved for them. Its advocates would have you think, indeed that it is *blind* devotion, like that of the Pharisees, at which they sneer: but where are we to look for that which is not so, and with which they are not at war? Is it to be found out of their own connexions? Every thing there which has the appearance of religion is pharisaism. It must therefore be among themselves if any where. But if the spirit of *love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness,* &c. prevail in their assemblies, it is singular that the same spirit should not appear in their writings. Who that has read them will say that their general tendency is to promote the love of either God or man? Toward worldly men indeed, who make no pretence to religion, the system seems to bear a friendly aspect: but it discovers no concern for their salvation. It would seem to have no tears to shed over a perishing world; and even looks with a jealous eye on those that have, glorying in the paucity of its numbers!

Whether the advocates of this system perceive the discordance between their own spirit and that of David, or whatever is the reason, it is common for them to apply to Christ a great deal of what he manifestly wrote of his own devout feeling. Christ, it seems, might be the subject of devotion, without any danger of self-right-

eous pride; but we cannot, and therefore must have little or nothing to do with it.

It is among people of this description that religious *feelings* and *affections* are ordinarily traduced. There are, no doubt, many enthusiastic feelings, which have no true religion in them. There is such a thing too as to make a Saviour of them, as well as of our duties. But we must not on this account exclude the one any more than the other. President Edwards, in his *Treatise on Religious Affections*, has proved beyond all reasonable contradiction, that the essence of true religion lies in them. In reading that work and Mr. Sandeman's Letters, we may see many of the same things exposed as enthusiastic; but the one is an oil that breaketh not the head, the other an effusion of pride and bitterness. The first, while rejecting what is naught, retains the savour of pure, humble, and holy religion: but the last, is as one who should propose to remove the disorders of the head by means of a guillotine.

It has been observed, that every religion, which, instead of arising from love to the truth, has its origin in *dislike* or *opposition*, even though it be to error, will come to nothing. You may sometimes see the principal inhabitants of a village fall out with the Clergyman, perhaps on account of some difference on the subject of tythes, and proceed to build a place for dissenting worship: also dissenting congregations themselves will sometimes divide from mere antipathy to the preacher, or from offence taken at some of the people: but did you ever know such undertakings productive of much good? When we adhere to a system of religion from opposition to something else, we do not so much regard it for what it *is*, as for what it is *not*. Whatever good, therefore, there may be in it, it will do us no good, and we shall go on waxing worse and worse. It is remarkable that the Sadducees, according to Prideaux, professed, at their outset, *the strictest adherence to the written word, utterly renouncing the traditions of the elders, which the Pharisees had agreed to hold.* In a little time, however, they rejected a great part of the word itself, and its most important doctrines, such as the resurrection and a future life. This was no more than might have been expected; for the origin of the sys-

tem was not attachment to the word, but dislike to the Pharisees.

How far these remarks apply to the religion in question, let those who are best acquainted with it judge. It doubtless contains some important truth, as did Sadduceanism at its outset; but the spirit which pervades it must render it doubtful whether this be held for its own sake so much as from opposition to other principles. If truth be loved for its own sake, it will occupy our minds irrespective of the errors which are opposed to it, and whether they exist or not. But, by the strain of writing and conversation which pervails in this connexion, it would seem as if the supposed absurdities of others were the life of their religion, and that if they were once to cease, their zeal would expire with them. It is the vulture, and not the dove, that is apparent in all their writings. Who will say that Mr. Sandeman sought the good of his opponents, when all through his publications he took every opportunity to hold them up to contempt; and with evident marks of pleasure to describe them and their friends as walking in a devout path to hell? The same is manifestly the spirit of his followers, though they may not possess his sarcastic talents. But are these the weapons of the Christian warfare? Supposing Flavel, Boston, the Erskines, &c. to have been bad men, was this the way to deal with them? Is there no medium between flattery and malignity.

Mr. Sandeman would persuade us that Paul was of his "temper."* Paul was certainly in earnest, and resisted error wherever he found it. He does not, however, treat those who build on a right foundation, though it be a portion of what will be ultimately consumed, as enemies to the truth.† And in his conduct even to the enemies of Christ, I recollect no sarcastic sneers, tending to draw upon them the contempt of mankind, but every thing calculated to do them good. If, however, it were not so, he must have practised differently from what he wrote. *The servant of the Lord*, he says in his Epistle to Timothy, *must not* STRIVE (as for mastery;) *but be* GENTLE *unto all men; in* MEEKNESS *instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* Paul

* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 9. † 1 Cor. iii. 11—15.

would have instructed and intreated those whom Mr. Sandeman scorned.

There is a calmness, I acknowledge, in the advocates of this doctrine, which distinguishes their writings from the low and fulsome productions of the English Antinomians. But calmness is not always opposed to bitterness: on the contrary, it may be studied for the very purpose of concealing it. *The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his sayings were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.*

The only thing that I know of which has the appearance of love is, that attachment which they have to one another, and which they consider as *love for the truth's sake.* But even here there are things which I am not able to reconcile. Love for the truth's sake unites the heart to every one *in proportion as he appears to embrace it:* but the nearer you approach to these people, provided you follow not along with them, so much the more bitter are their invectives. Again: Love for the truth's sake takes into consideration its practical effects. It was truth embodied in the spirit and life that excited the attachment of the apostle John: *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children* WALKING IN TRUTH. But that which excites their love seems to be the "clear views" which they conceive their friends to entertain above other professing Christians. Once more: Love, be it for the sake of what it may, will so unite us to one another as to render separation painful, and lead to the use of all possible means of preventing it. But such is the discipline of those who drink into these principles, that, for differences which others would consider as objects of forbearance, they can separate men from their communion in considerable numbers, with little or no apparent concern. I can reconcile such things with self-love; but not with *love for the truth's sake.*

Secondly: The spirit of primitive Christianity was a spirit of *meekness and humility.* Of this Christ himself was the great pattern; and they that would be his disciples must "learn of him who was meek and lowly of heart." They were unbelievers, and not Christians, who *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* He that would be wise was required to

become a fool, that he might be wise. The apostle Paul, notwithstanding his high attainments in the knowledge of Christ, reckoned himself as knowing nothing comparatively, desiring above all things THAT HE MIGHT KNOW HIM, *and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings and be made conformable unto his death.* If any man *thought that he knew any thing*, he declared that he knew nothing yet as he ought to know. But is this the spirit of the system in question? One of the first things that presents itself is a pretence to something very nearly akin to infallibility; an imposing air in all its decisions, tending to bear down timid spirits, especially as the sincerity, and consequently the Christianity of the party is suspended upon his entirely yielding himself up to it.

If it be necessary to become fools that we may be wise, how are we to account for those "clear views of the gospel" of which these people boast? They have given abundant proof that they account others fools who do not see with them; and they may account themselves to have been such till they imbibed their present principles: but if any symptoms have appeared of their being fools in their own eyes *from that time forward*, they have escaped my observation. Instead of a self-diffident spirit, which treats with respect the understanding of others, and implores divine direction, no sooner have these principles taken possession of a man, than they not only render him certain that he is in the right, but instantly qualify him to pronounce on those who follow not with him as destitute of the truth.

We may be told, however, that there is one species of pride at least, of which the system cannot be suspected, namely that of *self-righteousness*, seeing it is that against which its abettors are constantly declaiming. But he that would know the truth must not take up with mere professions. If a self-righteous spirit consist in *trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others,* I see not how they are to be acquitted of it. A self-righteous spirit and its opposite will be allowed to be drawn with sufficient prominency in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The question is, which of these characters is exemplified by those who enter fully into the Sandemanian system? Is it the publican?

Look at it: I am aware that he is the favourite of the party, and so he is of other parties; for you never heard of any who were the professed advocates of the Pharisee; but are they of the *spirit* of the publican? Rather, are they not manifestly of the spirit of the Pharisee, who looked down with scorn upon his fellow-worshipper?

Mr. Braidwood, referring to a late publication by one of this class of professing Christians, who calls himself *Simplex*, writes as follows:—"The work referred to seems intended chiefly to show how much *Simplex*, and they who agree with him, *despise others*, and how far they *alone* are from *trusting to themselves that they are righteous*. This their apparent inconsistency, their confident assertions when no proof is given, their unfeeling and indiscriminate censures, (which therefore cannot be always just,) and their fearless anathemas against all who follow not with them, prevent them from obtaining a hearing, not only from those whom they might be warranted to consider as false professors, but from disciples of Christ, who need to be taught the way of God more perfectly. And in this also they glory.

"If they would suffer an exhortation from a fellow-sinner, I would entreat them to recollect that the Pharisee praying in the temple, disdained the publican, while the publican disdained no man, and had nothing to say except what regarded himself and THE MOST HIGH.—*God be merciful to me a sinner*. They will never successfully combat self-righteousness till they themselves become *poor and of a contrite spirit*. The most effectual way to condemn pride, is to give an *example* of humility.

"Self-abasement corresponds with the humbling doctrine of Christ crucified: while the indulgence of an opposite spirit, in connexion with clear views of the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace, presents a most unnatural and unedifying object—the publican turning the chase upon the Pharisee, and combating him with his own weapons! Nay, he who professes to account himself the chief of sinners, having once begun to imitate an example so repugnant to the genuine influence of the doctrine for which he contends, now proceeds to attack all who come in his way—self-condemned publicans, not entirely of his own mind, as well as

proud Pharisees, avowing their impious claims upon the Divine Being. May we not ask, *Who art thou that judgest?*"*

As to Mr. Braidwood's allowing them to possess "clear views of the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace," I do not understand how such views can accompany, and still less produce, such a spirit as he has described; but with regard to the spirit itself, it is manifestly drawn from life, and is of greater effect than if he had written a volume on the subject. Whether his observations do not equally apply to that *marked separation* of church-members from others in public worship, said to be practised of late in Ireland, and to which he refers in page 32, let those who have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil judge.

Lastly: The spirit of primitive Christianity was *catholic* and *pacific*. Its language is, *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.—As many as walk by this rule,* (that is, the cross of Christ,) *peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.—All that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours, Grace be unto them, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

There were cases in which the apostles and first Christians were obliged to withdraw even from brethren who walked disorderly; but this would give them pain. And if the disordered state of the Christian world at present render it necessary for some of the friends of Christ to withdraw from others, it must needs, to a truly good man, be a matter of deep regret. It will be his concern, too, to diminish the breach rather than widen it; and to consider the things wherein he agrees with others, and as far as he conscientiously can, to act with them. If we see individuals, or a community, who, instead of such regret, are generally employed in censuring all who follow not with them, as enemies to the truth: and, instead of acting with them in things wherein they are agreed, are studious to render the separation as wide as possible, and glory in it—can we hesitate to say this is not Christianity?

There is a zeal which may properly be denominated *catholic*, and one which may as properly be denominated *sectarian*. It is

* Letters on various Subjects, &c. Introduction.

not supposed that any man, or body of men, can be *equally* concerned in promoting Christ's interest in all places. As our powers are limited, we must each build the wall, as it were, over against our own houses. Nor are we obliged to be *equally* concerned for the prosperity of all religious undertakings, in which the parties may be in the main on the side of Christ. It is right that we should be most interested in that which approaches the nearest to truth and true religion. But true catholic zeal will nevertheless have the good of the universal church of Christ for its grand object, and will rejoice in the prosperity of every denomination of Christians, *in so far* as they appear to have the mind of Christ. Those who builded the wall against their own houses would not consider themselves as the only builders, but would bear good will to their brethren, and keep in view the rearing of the *whole* wall, which should encompass the city. As it is not our being of the religion of Rome, nor of any other which happens to be favoured by the state, that determines our zeal to be catholic; so, it is not our being of a sect, or party of Christians, or endeavouring with Christian meekness and frankness to convince others of what we account the mind of Christ, that gives it the character of sectarian. It is *a being more concerned to propagate those things wherein we differ from other Christians, than to impart the common salvation.* Where this is the case we shall so limit the kingdom of heaven to ourselves as nearly to confine our good wishes, prayers, and efforts to our own denomination, and treat all others as if we had nothing to do with them in religious matters but in a way of censure and dispute. Wherein this kind of zeal differs from that of the Pharisees, that compassed sea and land to make proselytes, but who, when made, were turned to them rather than to God, I cannot understand.

It is remarkable, that, notwithstanding all which has been written by the advocates of this system about a free gospel to the ungodly, they do not seem to have much to do in labouring for the conversion of men of this description. Their principal attention, like that of the Socinians, seems directed towards religious people of other denominations, and from them their forces have been mostly recruited. This may not have been universally the case, but

from every thing that I have seen and heard, it is very generally so: and if this do not betray a zeal more directed to the making of proselytes to themselves than of converts to Christ, it will be difficult to determine what does.

The [zeal of the apostles was directed to the correction of evils, the healing of differences, and the uniting of the friends of Jesus Christ: but the zeal produced by this system appears to be of a contrary tendency. Wherever it most prevails, we hear most of bitterness, contention, and division.

It may be said, this is no more than was true of the gospel itself, which set a man at variance with his father, his mother, and his nearest friends; and relates not to what it *causes*, but to what, through the corruptions of men, it *occasions*. The words of our Lord, however, do not describe the bitterness of believers against unbelievers, but of unbelievers against believers, who as Cain hated his brother, hate them for the gospel's sake.

It has been said, that "the poignancy of Mr. Sandeman's words arises from their being true." The same might be said, and with equal justice, of any other "bitter words," for which men of contemptuous spirits know how to "whet their tongues." If the doctrine which Mr. Sandeman taught were true, it would do good to them that believed it. It certainly produces its own likeness in them; but what is it? Is it not "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others?" Is it not descrying the mote in a brother's eye, while blinded to the beam in their own?

There is a very interesting description given in the Epistle of James, of two opposite kinds of *wisdom*. The first is represented as coming "from above," the last as "coming *not* from above," but as being *earthly, sensual, devilish*. That is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*: this works "bitter zeal and strife in the heart." *The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace*, and in making peace, by the one: but by the other is [produced *confusion, and every evil work.* Yet these last are supposed to "glory;" but in glorying they *lie against the truth.* Without wishing to ascribe either to bodies of people indiscriminately, there is enough said to enable us to form a judgment of *things* by the effects which they produce.

To conclude,—It is no part of my design to vindicate or apologize for the errors of other denominations. The Christian church is not what it was at the beginning; and though every body of Christians are not equally corrupt, yet none is so pure, but that, if its character were reported by the great Head of the church, he would have "somewhat against" it. But whatever errors or evils may be found in any of us, it is not this species of reform, even if it were universally to prevail, that would correct them. On the contrary, if we may judge from its effects during the last fifty years, it would lead the Christian world, if not to downright Infidelity, yet to something that comes but very little short it.

I am

Your affectionate

Friend and Brother,

ANDREW FULLER.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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